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ABSTRACT

A summary of desirable and undesirable components of delinquency prevention programs, this paper is intended to help planners, grantmakers, program operators, and others in the development of such programs. Following an introduction, Chapter 2 presents a critical review of contemporary explanations of causes of delinquency and means used to prevent it. Chapter 3 begins with the assumption that there are arrangements and processes in contemporary social institutions that generate delinquent behavior. It then details ways in which these arrangements and processes should be altered, especially in schools, but also in employment and community service. Chapter 4 describes the characteristics of short-term and smaller scale projects that can be effective in helping some delinquents and in demonstrating principles that may be applied on a larger scale. It emphasizes that such programs ought to be part of a conventional legitimated opportunity in school, work, or community service and not isolate or stigmatize participants. Chapter 5 deals with implementation problems arising in delinquency prevention programs that demand significant changes in organizational routines. It lists difficulties that are to be anticipated (such as organizational inertia and complexity) and conditions that make it more likely that programs will succeed (such as external pressures on organizations that could be resolved by change). (Author/JM)

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DELINQUENCY PREVENTION: THEORIES AND STRATEGIES

PREPARED FOR:

THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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FOREWORD

The passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 clearly mandates the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to assume leadership in planning and programming to prevent and reduce delinquency. Traditionally, however, the Federal government has had difficulty in selecting delinquency prevention programs to support. This is in part due to the fact that delinquency prevention is a term that lacks clarity. The body of theory relating to delinquency is vast and diffuse; and, in the absence of clear validated theories of delinquency causation, a diverse array of programs bearing the label "delinquency prevention" has developed. This is understandable: If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.

This volume, Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies, is a welcome addition to the body of knowledge about prevention. Through a review of the diverse academic, professional and popular views of delinquency causation, those directions that appear to be most promising, based on the available evidence, are identified. Further, the document suggests grounds for selecting, developing, designing, and evaluating projects intended to reduce the incidence of delinquent acts.

The implementation of any public program involves making hard choices within limited resources. It is inconceivable that OJJDP or the Delinquency Prevention Technical Assistance Program funded by this Office could provide systematic support for the whole range of activities called delinquency prevention. To do so would so diffuse our efforts as to negate the possibility for advancing program practice and building upon the body of knowledge which presently exists. This volume will be used to focus OJJDP's delinquency prevention programming efforts and to develop policy with other Federal agencies around prevention issues. Similarly, this volume will assist State and local decisionmakers in developing and selecting prevention initiatives which they will support.

This paper is the first in a series designed to explore the implications of prevention options. A supplemental volume, State Options for Supporting Delinquency Prevention, focuses on the opportunities for State agencies, particularly State Planning Agencies participating in the LEAA Formula Grants Program, to promote and support the program forms recommended in Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies. Three additional working papers: Selective Organizational Change in Education, Self-Contained Programs in Education, and Self-Contained Programs in Work and Community Service, are designed to provide guidance to local practitioners in conducting the sequence of activities necessary to implement the program forms suggested in Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies.

I view this paper as a critical step in providing the framework necessary for sound prevention planning and programming. I am hopeful that it

will initiate conversations and experimentation; I anticipate that continued activities at the State and local level will test, expand, and extend the concepts and strategies proposed. This type of activity is an important step in creating the conditions and the environment in which young people can grow to become healthy, self-sufficient adults.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Such a project owes much to many. The paper attempts to build on the work of others who have studied and worked on youth problems and programs; we hope that their work is cited appropriately in the text. The opportunity to approach technical assistance systematically should be credited to the sponsor, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: James Gould, David West, and Phyllis Modely should be mentioned particularly. The considerable thought, persistence and diligent effort needed to convert that opportunity to an operating technical assistance program, as well as many contributions to this volume, are the work of staff at the Westinghouse National Issues Center: Jeanne Weaver, Gerald Croan, Gloria Cohen, Valerie Barish, Carol Cioffi, Peg Skarrow, and Raul Tuset. David Hawkins and Joseph Weis were generous with their own time and the resources of the Center for the Assessment of Delinquent Behavior and its Prevention. The reviewers invested more thought and care than reasonably could have been expected; they are: Albert Carderelli, Robert Coates, Delbert Elliott, Tom Kane, Ken Libertoff, Barbara McDonald, Oliver Moles, Kenneth Polk, Ed Pieksma, and Claire Salop. Other staff at the Center for Action Research appear, unnamed, throughout the work: Sylvia Beville, Paula Hiatt, and Robert Hunter. That the pile of paper initially produced ever became fit to print is owed to Kathryn's mother, Karen Bird, and to Joanne Brown and William D. Wallace.

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DELINQUENCY PREVENTION:

THEORIES AND STRATEGIES

SUMMARY

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This paper is intended to support planners, grantmakers, program operators, consultants, trainers, and evaluators in the development, design, implementation, and evaluation of delinquency prevention programs.

Delinquency prevention has not been established as a coherent practice with reliable results. A main purpose of this paper is to suggest how delinquency prevention can be a distinct and accountable type of programming and, furthermore, to provide grounds for some of the choices that will be made in design and implementation. A second main purpose is to advance delinquency prevention practice, not merely reflect it; this requires review of the field, selection of what appear to be the more promising options, and work to refine those options. Accordingly, the paper is a proposal about what is important in delinquency prevention.

1.2 Delinquency Prevention Among Youth Programs

Considered as one part of an array of programs for youth, delinquency prevention activities should bear more specifically on delinquent behavior than many youth development programs appear to, yet they should operate so as to reduce initial instances of delinquent behavior rather than only reacting to it, as remedial programs so often do. As in public health programs, the emphasis is on removing or reducing factors that contribute to the problem. The central meaning of prevention is to alter environments so as to preserve youth in a relatively law-abiding status.

For the purpose of this paper, "delinquency prevention" will be taken to refer to activities *designed* (as distinct from intended or hoped) to reduce the incidence of delinquent *acts* (as distinct from arrests), and directed to youth who are not being dealt with as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system (thus excluding activities that are very clearly *reactions* to trouble).

1.3 The Need for Experimentation

In light of the diversity of delinquency prevention theories and the variable results of delinquency prevention practice, delinquency prevention should be taken as an inherently experimental venture, in which one systematically reviews current theory, research evidence, and experience to select a few promising options, each of which can be implemented and evaluated with sufficient rigor to increase understanding of what works.

The programs envisioned are fully operational but should have mechanisms for ongoing improvement, based on evaluative feedback built into them.

1.4 Limits of the Paper

The task here is to derive practical options that are well-informed by theory and research and can be applied now. Towards this end, we have made choices among material to include; the end product is less than exhaustive. Although the orientation is practical, we do not claim that combining every ingredient proposed will produce a specific model program with universal feasibility and effectiveness. The discussion of management, planning, and implementation issues contained in this volume is limited to points that are peculiar to the program recommendations made. Other sources should be consulted for general coverage of administrative topics.

2. CHAPTER TWO: CONTEMPORARY DELINQUENCY THEORY AND RESEARCH AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PREVENTION

This chapter presents a critical review of contemporary explanations of causes of delinquency and means used to prevent it. The purpose is to narrow the field under consideration to a few relatively promising approaches and, thereby, establish boundaries for the succeeding chapters of this volume. The overall conclusion derived from contemporary theory and research findings is that organizational policies and practices affect interaction patterns and that these patterns, in turn, affect the behavior of individual youth. The prevention programs examined can be grouped into five categories: Those that should be rejected as having no defensible basis; those that should be rejected because they represent inappropriate or ineffective implementation of a defensible explanation of delinquency; those whose merit is highly questionable in light of evidence to date; those that offer short-term benefits or benefits to limited numbers at substantial cost; and those with promise of broad and lasting benefits at moderate cost.

2.1 Programs Having No Defensible Basis

Explanations of delinquent behavior based on presumed personality differences, presumed biological differences, and a presumed connection between learning disabilities and delinquency have been subject to intense scrutiny and are not supported. On the basis of the evidence, individual psychotherapy, group counseling, casework, and other program efforts to apply these explanations should be rejected. In addition, early identification or selection for treatment based on personality test scores, individual socioeconomic level, intact vs. broken homes, or criminal histories of parents is not recommended. All of these factors have been found to have little or no utility in predicting delinquent behavior.

2.2 Programs that Represent Inappropriate or Ineffective Implementation of Defensible Explanations of Delinquency

Despite having some plausible theoretical or correlational basis, a number of programs should be rejected on the basis of their repeated failure to demonstrate effectiveness in reducing delinquency after having been tried and evaluated. These include: Behavior modification confined to treatment settings; wilderness programs without followup in clients' home communities; most forms of family therapy; recreation programs; employment programs that merely consume time; detached work in street gangs; and increasing the severity of punishment for wrongdoing. In addition, there are logical gounds for believing the following to be ineffective prevention practices: Admonishing young persons to associate with better companions; lecturing youth on the merits of respecting parents, teachers, or representatives of the justice system; using individual treatment to counter the effects of negative labeling; and persuading young persons to reduce their aspirations.

2.3 Programs Having Highly Questionable Merit, Based on Evidence to Date

Foremost in this category is early identification of predelinquents on the basis of teacher ratings or judgments. The evidence to date makes an alternative explanation of the apparent success of these predictions at least as plausible as the assumption that teachers are uncanny judges of character. The risk of generating more delinquency appears to outweigh any benefits associated with this kind of program. A second type of program in this category is that focusing expressly on parents of infants or very young children. The assumption that "it's all over" at an early age appears grossly overdrawn, in the light of evidence to date.

2.4 Programs Offering Limited Benefits at Substantial Cost per Client

A number of programs show promise for short-term effectiveness for limited numbers of youth. Noncoercive programs to teach parents social learning theory and monitor their use of it have had favorable evaluations to date; they appear to be effective in reducing troublesome behavior, at least for children aged 5 through 13. Providing individual youth with vocational skills and "middle-class polish" is a way to enhance opportunities for a few, provided that recruitment is nonstigmatizing. These approaches have prospects for immediate results on a small scale, but they have two substantial drawbacks. First, working with individuals or small groups is costly, even over a short period. When requisite long-term followup is added, the cost per client is likely to become enormous. Second, programs targeted on individuals or their families must be repeated endlessly. Even in the unlikely event that everyone in a community could receive the services they need at one point in time, the process still would have to occur perpetually to keep pace with population turnover and maturation. A more cost-efficient category of program is the training of teachers, police, and others in regular contact with youth. This approach has the shortcoming that policies of the organizations that employ those trained may limit their opportunity to apply what they learn.

2.5 Programs Promising Broad and Lasting Benefits at Moderate Cost

The review of contemporary explanations of delinquency and prevention program experiences to date points to selective organizational change as the approach having the most promise. The evidence reviewed identifies the school as paramount in the lives of most youth, so it is nominated as a primary target of efforts to bring about change. Recommended programs in this category include those directed at modifying ability grouping and other school policies that generate inappropriate labeling and systematically rob segments of the student population of opportunities to demonstrate usefulness and competence, thereby making it difficult for some youth to value their affiliation in this arena. Also recommended are: Programs to modify organizational practices (in schools, justice, and the world of work) that reflect stereotypic presumptions of undesirable traits among youth having certain socioeconomic, racial, or ethnic backgrounds; work to improve the images of law enforcement and juvenile justice; programs to broaden the range of conventional ties available to youth, particularly in the areas of work and community service; "mainstreaming" in schools of instruction in parenting and other life experiences; programs designed to reduce youth perceptions of powerlessness; and steps to reduce the flow of derogatory news from school to home or from the juvenile justice system to school. All such programs are viewed as addressing more fundamental causes of delinquency than the bulk of efforts targeted on individuals or on group interaction.

3. CHAPTER THREE: DELINQUENCY PREVENTION AS SELECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The most direct and immediate implication of the well-supported delinquency theories is that there are arrangements and processes in contemporary social institutions that generate delinquent behavior. To reduce delinquent behavior, these arrangements and processes should be altered. The most fruitful arenas for delinquency prevention initiatives are education, work and community service broadly defined, and their interactions with each other and with families. Schooling is taken as central in these interactions.

3.1 Options for Selective Organizational Change in Schools

By the time they are of junior and senior high school age, schooling is the main organizing element in young persons' lives. This is not a matter of time spent in classrooms or hallways versus home or the street but a matter of widespread values attributed to schooling.

A relatively narrow array of specifically academic competencies dominates the student role, which is the main role available to youth. Thus is created a very narrow passage to adulthood, fraught with difficulties for many youth; many of these difficulties generate delinquent behavior.

3.1.1 Values

The issue for delinquency prevention is whether the values depicted and attainable in schools are of such a character that young persons can develop a commitment to -- a stake in -- schooling and conventional behavior. The expression of and emphasis placed on certain values in schools are related to delinquency

Less emphasis should be placed on winning in competitive ventures and more should be placed on contributing to cooperative ventures. By definition, there can be few winners and, for there to be winners, there must be losers. An overemphasis on competition reduces the grounds for attachment to schooling for large numbers of youth.

In the place of a narrow emphasis on the value of a few high-status occupations, the value of a wide array of occupations necessary to society should be shown. As youth explore the occupations they aspire to or will settle for, the discovery that the occupations in which they are interested are devalued in schools diminishes the grounds for commitment to schooling.

- In the place of a narrow emphasis on a limited array of peculiarly academic competencies, include as valuable a broader array of relevant social, civic, and practical competencies.

- Enhance the number and kinds of ways that persons and groups of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic character are made to feel that they belong and have prospects for educational and social success. Often, artifacts of race, ethnicity and class irrelevant to learning are the daily occasion for derogating interaction that destroys attachment to schooling as surely as the more overt forms of pushing out.

Because such values are pervasive in schooling, practical and concrete opportunities to renegotiate them are numerous in school system, school building, and classroom activities, ranging from the drafting of goals statements to the description of classes to the selective availability of materials in a counselor's office.

3.1.2 School Structure

A realignment or renegotiation of the expression of values is realized, or not, in the structure of activities taking place in schools. Several possible lines of reorganization are relevant to delinquency prevention:

Changes in the Curriculum

Changes in the curriculum provide organized, credited educational support for a broader array of work, community involvement, and practical activities. This is not a call for added curriculum options but for the revision of present curricula. The aim is to demonstrate rather than merely claim that the traditional disciplines are relevant to living a life. By making working and the study of work, community involvement and the study of communities, and practical competencies the specific subjects, there should be immediate gains in the attraction and relevance of school studies for a larger proportion of students. The result should be increased commitment to school and reduced delinquent behavior.

Realignments of the curriculum are likely to appear forbidding on three counts. First, they tend to increase the proportion of school activities that occur outside the school building, raising questions of responsibility for the safety and conduct of the students. Recognizing these questions, the proposal is for organized programs around which acceptable norms of accountability can be built. Where growing student responsibility for managing one's own time, safety, and conduct is a primary educational objective, the prospect of increased involvement outside the school building must be an acceptable educational risk. Second, there may be a problem in finding those persons and organizations outside the school who will help organize, supervise, and instruct students in work involvements, community service, and participation in community affairs. The magnitude of this problem appears to be exaggerated because there is little history of such school/community partnerships; practice should steadily diminish the problem. Finally, such curriculum initiatives are likely to require reorganization of existing curriculum components, materials, and methods and to require school staff to collaborate across traditional disciplinary lines. Again, the magnitude of the difficulty probably is exaggerated; what one can accomplish in a first trial is considerably less than can be accomplished over time as a new practice is built up.

The intended effect of these curriculum initiatives -- to increase the grounds for commitment to schooling -- is likely to be compromised greatly if these curriculum options are organized for students perceived as troublesome, incompetent, or unfit in some other curriculum that is the "real" business of the school. These options should take their places as standard parts of the curriculum, recruiting from all segments of the student body.

Changes in Classification and Sorting of Students

The sorting of students is a main outcome of schooling, intended or not. How the sorting occurs has a direct bearing on delinquency prevention. Sorting processes that reduce the grounds for commitment to schooling are implicated in delinquency. Several recommendations can be made.

- Examine and work to change ways in which school organization may operate on prior school experience to affect bonding, the distribution of school opportunity, and labeling.

Three arrangements of schooling can be singled out for attention. One is the organization of the curriculum as an inverted pyramid or prerequisites, in which difficulties at an early stage make all subsequent opportunities less and less accessible. The direction for change would be towards reducing prerequisites to a demonstrably essential minimum, to describe prerequisites in terms of specific competencies rather than as completion of other courses, and a systematic review of the possibilities for making curriculum elements maximally accessible to diverse audiences.

A second and highly related procedure is that of tracking, where whole sets of courses are designated as distinct curricula, sometimes leading to different diplomas. It appears the contribution to delinquent behavior will be greatest where the tracks are most visibly distinguished and most clearly assigned different status, where the opportunities of a track are all of the less valued sort, and where there is considerable and increasing difficulty shifting from one track to another or taking courses out of track. The general directions for reform are thus suggested, and include abolition of any formal track system and work to assign more equitable status -- both formally and informally -- to various portions of the curriculum.

A third problematic form of organization in this connection is the practice and policy of using marks for class performance as criteria of eligibility for participation in other opportunities that the school provides. The intended effect of such practices is to require students having problems to concentrate on their studies before they engage in other things; the unintended effect can be to reduce the grounds for commitment to schooling and thus to reduce, rather than increase, the effort put into studies.

- Examine and work to change ways in which school organization operates on race, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity of students to affect bonding with the school, the distribution of opportunity, and labeling.

The concern here is with the ways in which *presumed* relationships between race, ethnicity and/or socioeconomic status, and school performance and delinquent behavior are actually *produced* in the schools, by way of stereotypes that affect judgments made in daily interaction. It appears that a large component of such processes is a reaction of school personnel to the *style* of some youth, their manner of speaking, dressing, interacting with school personnel and friends, all of which may have little or no bearing on their objective capabilities as students. Options for

reorganization include: Examining rules of student conduct and interaction with adults to determine whether the school is regulating styles of behavior that have no intrinsic bearing on educational achievement or order and that penalize one group of students disproportionately; examining discipline procedures and records to determine whether teacher expectations may result in more severe sanctions against the routine interactional styles of some groups of students; and examining the composition of tracks, classes and extracurricular activities, which may reveal assumptions about class or race that are informally applied through such routines as counseling, recruitment, eligibility criteria, and contacts with parents.

The general problem being raised in the preceding points is the tendency to connect each school opportunity with many other opportunities the school provides. For some students, this means that the entire range of possibilities is open. For others, it means that difficulties in one area will be compounded systematically, and often independent of the objective capabilities or performance of the students, so that the school is increasingly closed, diminishing the grounds for commitment to schooling and increasing the risk of delinquency behavior.

Changes in Governance and the Organization of Influence

Differences between school personnel and groups of parents in expectations about such matters as style, discussed above, will produce conflicts either at home or at school. A similar argument may be made about the values which are to be emphasized in schooling. Finally, having a modicum of influence over an activity is an important part of commitment to that activity. Two main directions for reform are indicated:

- Expand the opportunities for student, parent and teacher participation in the governance and operation of the school, by including students whereever possible in planning and decisionmaking, seeking ways to make parents visible and welcome members of the school, and involving students and parents wherever possible in instructional activities as tutors, aides, materials developers, instructors and team leaders.

- Ensure that the system of discipline is (and is perceived by students, parents, and school personnel as) legitimate, fair, consistent, and clear.

It appears that a source of alienation of students from school is the perception that discipline rules and procedures are arbitrary, not essential to school operations, and unfair, and that the differential

application of vague or shifting expectations for behavior is an active source of conflict. A review of school discipline rules and procedures could begin be asking which rules are clearly and specifically necessary to legitimate school operations. Where the solid case can be made that a rule is necessary, it ought to be easier to express the rule and its justification more clearly and to determine how the rule should be applied and enforced.

3.1.3 Social Interaction

The structure of the schools is interpreted and made real to the members by the members through interaction.

- Avoid processes in which unfavorable assessments of acts systematically become negative assessments of persons and, therefore, cause those persons to define themselves negatively.

Cumulative processes such as grading and evaluation appear to present this difficulty. The route out of such dilemmas appears to be the increased use of evaluation procedures, tied to instructional techniques such as individual instruction or competency-based instruction, which link the instruction and the evaluation to specific, understandably described competencies.

A second cumulative process implicated in delinquent behavior is the system of files *and conversations* that are related to performance in the curriculum but that concentrate more on conduct. The cumulative effect of this practice is to generate all-encompassing labels, which might be favorable but easily could be negative and which tend to color all subsequent interactions with the student, with substantial consequences both for academic success and for delinquency. Directions for reform include: Limiting entries to this system to demonstrably necessary and helpful ones, periodic purging of the record, and work with school personnel to increase their sensitivity to the consequences of this system.

- Avoid processes in which single characteristics or limited sets of characteristics of students come to define them wholly.

For students identified as retarded or as having learning disabilities, typical responses to such identifications tend to isolate these students from others. The difference between these students and others, which is but one of their characteristics, comes to define them, and their position in the school, totally. The direction for reform is to minimize segregation, isolation, and labeling of such students, and to work out arrangements for providing specialized assistance in the context of conventional activities involving all students.

- Balance the proportion of positive and negative feedback towards the positive side.

A system that assigns an A grade to 90 percent success on tasks and an F to 50 percent success on tasks is greatly imbalanced toward the negative side, since it turns 50 percent success into total failure. Each system of feedback -- grades, counseling, discipline procedures, etc., -- can be examined to determine whether persons are more likely to receive feedback as a result of something bad that happens or as a result of something good that happens. Corrections can be made to regulate the balance.

3.1.4 Summary

The point of all of these discussions of schooling is that, for a significant portion of the student body, the values emphasized, the structure of the school, and the interaction of schooling compose a pattern of reinforcements by which these students learn that what they care about is not valued, that they (and those with whom they associate) are not expected to do much of worth, are not going to go very far and, when they get there, it won't amount to much. They learn that there is little for them in schools. All of the preceding suggestions recognize that, at present, schools are the main context in which youth can develop "a bond to conventional lines of action that are relevant to adult roles," that is, to increasingly responsible and productive roles. The intent of the recommendations is to change that pattern of reinforcements, to increase the grounds for attachment and commitment to conventional lines of action which the school can provide.

3.2 Options for Organizational Changes in Work and Community Service

Both work and community service can provide opportunities to be useful, to be competent, to belong, and to exert some influence. They are the main possible contexts for socialization and bonding other than the schools, and so are central to delinquency prevention. However, their effect on delinquent behavior remains problematic. Employment programs have not been shown to have a reliably beneficial effect on delinquent behavior; some even have been counterproductive. Thus, the specific social qualities of the work and service that bear on delinquency prevention must be examined.

We are interested in the quantity of opportunities to work and serve, and in the quality of those opportunities, at a time when the availability of work and its quality for adults often are described as problems. Substantial questions of economic and social policy are raised, many of them relevant to delinquency prevention. In keeping with the approach of this volume, this section concentrates on more modest initiatives on the assumptions that, within present economic conditions and policy, significant latitude remains to increase and improve work and service opportunities as tools for delinquency prevention, and that local work will inform policymaking at other levels.

Involving youth in work and community service presents a variety of practical problems of describing and organizing activity worth doing, of supervision, training, insurance, etc. None of these problems are likely to be resolved easily with universal satisfaction. Indeed, the very difficulty of involving youth in work and community service should be taken as a sign of the disorganization of the paths to adulthood and, therefore, a reason to undertake initiatives in this area.

By contrast with employment and community service programs, which concentrate primarily on special training and coaching for youth to enter available activities, delinquency prevention calls more for initiatives to *reorganize* work and service activities so that more youth can be more satisfactorily involved as a matter of course and supported routinely by some of the school initiatives already mentioned.

Those engaged in delinquency prevention have a basic choice in relation to work and community service opportunities. They can attempt to mount their own programs of employment and service specifically for purposes of delinquency prevention or they can apply their attention and resources selectively in efforts most likely to contribute to the expansion and improvement of existing systems of work and service opportunity for youth. As they do so, they can work to refine the bearing of those systems on delinquent behavior. Given the improbability of mounting any independent effort on a scale adequate for delinquency prevention, the latter option is recommended. This means that, more often, delinquency prevention projects will be established within existing work and service programs for youth, and will be used to expand such programs and refine their influence on delinquent behavior.

Three related lines of work come to the fore in augmenting existing systems of work and service and in refining their bearing on delinquency prevention. First is work with existing organizations and associations to increase understanding of relations between work, community service, the present general condition of youth and delinquency and its prevention, and to increase active community support for the expansion of work and service opportunities as a device for the prevention of delinquency.

Also needed is the provision of support and assistance to employer organizations and community service organizations to examine their activities and to design specific, feasible reorganizations that both increase youths' opportunities for work and service and increase the probability that the work or service activity will influence delinquent behavior.

Finally, attention must be given to the routines by which youth may find their way to work and service activities. Here, the cooperation of employer organizations, employment agencies and schools in the areas of recruitment, eligibility, and referral, and their effects on the accessibility of work and service opportunities are central concerns.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: DELINQUENCY PREVENTION IN SELF-CONTAINED PROGRAMS FOR SELECTED POPULATIONS

Some short-term and smaller scale projects that work with selected populations of youth can apply leading delinquency theories to delinquency prevention, both to provide a preventive mode of short-circuiting existing delinquency-producing processes for youth ensnared in them and to discover how to create situations in which delinquent behavior is reduced, so that the principles and methods involved can be applied on the larger scale needed for delinquency prevention.

The general form of the program is to attempt to create, for a selected population of youth, a social situation likely in itself to limit engagement in delinquent behavior, likely to affect in a complementary manner other situations in which the participants are involved and likely to overcome past experience that may have contributed to delinquent behavior.

These programs are intended to reduce delinquent behavior by: (a) Increasing opportunities for bonding and commitment to conventional lines of action; (b) by reducing strain (or providing greater correspondence) between aspirations and the legitimate means of attaining them; (c) by increasing interaction with groups supporting law-abiding behavior; and (d) by reducing negative labeling or relabeling participants favorably.

Several principles or strategies for establishing such programs are recommended:

- Base the program in a specifically *augmented*, conventional opportunity in school, work, community service, or a combination of these. Credited instruction will be a desirable component in most cases. It will be necessary to negotiate, among the young participants, the adults who work with them, and others an activity that is perceived widely as legitimate--useful, calling for competence, interesting, providing opportunities to belong, and providing opportunities to exert influence on the course of the activity -- and, therefore, capable of legitimating its participants.

- Cultivate the widely shared expectation that the young participants have something to contribute and will perform productively with appropriate support and organization.

- Describe the program not as a delinquency prevention program but in terms of the positive, legitimate merits of the activity in which the program is based.

- Negotiate the basic activity specifically to realize the legitimacy and description of the program through the interactions that occur in the normal course of events. This will require detailed analysis of the expectations that govern the activity; of the specific skills and information required and attainable in the activity; and of the probable cumulative effects (e.g., labeling) of interaction about these expectations, skills, and information.

- Serve a mix of youth such that, as a group, the participants will be perceived as an ordinary or usual group to preserve the legitimacy of the program.

- To obtain leverage on delinquent behavior and to confirm the intended effect of the program, apply a method of selecting and recruiting the participants that identifies a service population on the basis of uniform criteria linked to common situations, conditions, and processes affecting a *class* of youth. At best, these situations, conditions, and processes will be implicated in the generation of delinquent behavior, and the corresponding criteria will be well correlated with delinquent behavior. The service population should be obtained by recruiting from the selected class of youth on the basis of the legitimate merits of the basic activity and not as a response to trouble, actual or anticipated. In this recruitment, the youth's participation (formally and informally) is voluntary. Given the complexities and difficulties involved and the centrality of the recruitment procedure to the program, the choice of selection criteria and the design of the recruitment procedure should receive extraordinary care.

- Design the program systematically to exploit opportunities to affect participants' standing in other settings by managing the flow of information (good news and bad news) generated in the program

to significant parties in those other settings. Identifying the specific merits attainable in the activity, providing for their routine recognition, and choosing a credible way of transmitting the information outside the program are all important to this strategy. In addition to the forms of social legitimation and recognition that should be built into the basic activity, these programs should provide credible, portable *credentials* which may open opportunities in the future and in other settings.

- To increase the chances for belonging, to increase recognition among adults, and to provide increased opportunities for youth and adults to negotiate mutually agreeable and legitimating expectations, maximize the opportunities for youth to work with each other and with adults on common tasks.

- Provide special support services for individual participants if there is a reason to believe they are needed and will be helpful. Some such services raise problems of isolation and negative labeling, so specific efforts should be made to regulate the effects of such services on the image of the program and on the standing of the young persons served. Provision of such services to presumably troubled or troublesome youth should not be used as a substitute for efforts to ensure that the situation presented to the youth by the activity has been organized appropriately. In this connection, a form of counseling or advice-giving, both for youth and for adults connected with the program, can be used to gather information useful in rearranging the situation as needed, and to ensure that the sometimes unfamiliar situation is correctly perceived by all parties and that all parties know how best to take advantage of opportunities presented within it.

- To maximize the chances that they will contribute to wider application of useful principles and strategies and will contribute to desirable organizational change, establish these delinquency prevention projects from the beginning *within* schools, employment programs, and community services organizations (where the youth

will be involved as providers, not clients). Among other things, this strategy implies the need for early efforts to form the needed partnerships with the sponsoring organizations and for specific attention to the possibility that the delinquency prevention project will become isolated within the sponsoring organization. The tactic for both cases is to attempt to secure the program characteristics needed for delinquency prevention while defining and organizing the program as an ordinary and desirable part of the sponsoring organization's program.

Clearly, the establishment of such delinquency prevention projects may require organizational change at least of moderate scope in the sponsoring organizations, and may require change in relations among sponsoring organizations.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: SOME IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Preceding chapters have called for direct efforts toward selective organizational change, and have proposed types of self-contained programs that also imply significant alterations in organizational routines. Organizational change is the central implementation problem for the programs recommended. We present here an interpretation of problems and processes of organizational change, which we believe is well suited to the initiatives which have been recommended and which is consonant with much of the present literature.

At present, the vast majority of delinquency prevention programs are based in self-contained programs of direct services -- primarily remedial -- to selected populations of youth. Organizational reform as a method of delinquency prevention is the option least used in practice. This situation reflects in part a preoccupation with delinquent behavior as a personal rather than a social product, the establishment of individual treatment as an institution, and the tendency to regard change as an evil. While organizational change of even modest scale may be a more complex undertaking than organizing typical service programs with new allocations, it appears that the magnitude of the difficulty has been overplayed as a result of the scarcity of well-conceived efforts. Tactics and methods should improve rapidly with systematic effort. Systematic efforts over reasonable periods of time appear to have been rare by virtue of persistent demands, over decades, for immediate and substantial results. The situation calls for serious, persistent, cumulative pursuit of well-developed and well-evaluated options.

Development of such options requires, first, the cultivation of an organizational perspective -- a habit of viewing and interpreting situations in terms of their organizational, as distinct from personal,

characteristics. To this might be added tenacity on a strategic point: The activities in which one engages are intended *directly* to alter some feature or process of an organization and thereby *indirectly* to affect individual youth, and not the other way around.

In the recommended programs, organizational arrangements -- rather than clients -- are selected for attention. The selection has a technical aspect of establishing a connection between some organizational feature and delinquent behavior, and a political aspect, which appears to boil down to making a connection between an organizational practice and a problem or need which is of sufficient concern to produce the necessary energy for efforts at organizational change. Out of the interplay of the technical and political issues comes the choice of organizational targets.

Some prominent difficulties of organizational change should be anticipated. Among these are: Organizational inertia, usually a more powerful force than any deliberate resistance; the fact that targeted organizational practices usually serve and often must continue to serve purposes other than the ones being addressed; the fact that targeted organizational practices are interconnected with other practices that must be taken into account; and the fact that the targeted practices have technical, economic, organizational, and political aspects, all of which must be taken into account, probably simultaneously. These difficulties are not insurmountable; they need to be anticipated and planned for.

As a result of some of these difficulties, the instigators of efforts towards organizational change are likely to have limited direct control over the situation. By contrast with the relatively more controllable -- but also more limited and ephemeral -- direct service treatment programs, the prospect of affecting many youth over a long span of time makes dealing with these difficulties worthwhile, and the more promising the more refined the tactics become.

In a set of working notes on these tactics, we argue that an organization is most likely to change in a desired direction when:

- There are identifiable external and internal pressures on the organization that a change could resolve, and those pressures are favorable to change of the intended type.

- These pressures are recognized by personnel in the organization as calling for their own action, are recognized as being connected with something they are doing or could do, and this recognition leads to the recognition of some person or persons in the organization as ones who can appropriately discuss the matter with others.

- Requests and demands are put to the appropriate, recognized delegates of the organization under appropriate circumstances, usually beginning with low formality and visibility and leading to more visible and public negotiations.

- There emerges a group within the organization that supports the intended change and will support the implementation.

- "Adaptive implementation assistance" is provided over the term and in the ways needed to turn an idea into a regular practice.

It appears that many persons, both in the organization which changes and outside it, can play valuable parts in such change processes. These persons need to figure out where they stand in the system involved and what parts of the process they reasonably could affect. They need to figure out who else they need to work with, because it is certain they can't do much alone. Most of the tactical decisions which will be made -- about whom one talks to, who one's allies are, when and how one should act, and a hundred other matters -- depend on the intended change. One objective and situation may provide one set of answers that may not apply at all to another objective and situation. *Persons intending to implement the delinquency prevention programs described here need always to have a view of the intended outcome (which they are ready to adapt as needed) or of an array of equally acceptable outcomes, to which their energies are directed.* "If you don't know where you are going, any path will take you there."

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This paper was prepared to support the Delinquency Prevention Technical Assistance Program of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. It is intended for use by staffs of planning and grant-making agencies, particularly the State Planning Agencies and Regional Planning Units associated with the LEAA program; by local project personnel; and by consultants, trainers, and others who support delinquency prevention programs.

Those who make decisions concerning the allocation of juvenile justice funds (SPA staffs and others) should find information in this volume that is helpful in establishing priorities among various types of prevention programs. In addition, there are strong implications for funding strategies with respect to time lines, phasing of project activities, and earmarking funds for particular purposes (such as evaluation). Local project staffs can draw on material in this volume in developing directions for new efforts, and they are urged also to seek ways to incorporate suggestions here into work they already have undertaken.

Those who support delinquency prevention programs from the "outside" can use to advantage their positions as relatively detached observers by identifying gaps between what is recommended in this volume and what actually is occurring in existing programs. Consultants, trainers, and technical assistance staff can adapt these recommendations for use by the programs with which they work. They also can draw from the material here in deciding how to allocate their own time to best serve the purpose of delinquency prevention.

For any of these persons, delinquency prevention presents a variety of problems. To begin with, there are diverse academic, professional, and popular views about what delinquency prevention amounts to and how it may be accomplished. By no stretch of the imagination is delinquency prevention an established, coherent practice with predictable results. The diversity of arguments about causes of delinquency is complemented by the variety of programs called "delinquency prevention" and by the uncertainty about the results of any of these programs. Recognition that the problem of delinquency is complex and bound up with other social conditions leads some persons even to doubt whether "delinquency prevention" can be a distinct category of programming, with measurable utility.

A main purpose of this paper is to suggest how delinquency prevention can be a distinct and accountable type of programming and to provide grounds for choices to be made in selecting, developing, designing, and evaluating projects.

Another main purpose of the paper -- and of the Delinquency Prevention Technical Assistance Program as a whole -- is to advance delinquency prevention practice, not merely reflect it. Much of what is being done as delinquency prevention clearly is ineffective; some of the more promising options are largely undeveloped and unpracticed. The paper argues for abandoning programs shown repeatedly to be ineffective and attempts to cultivate some of the more promising options to make them more attractive and feasible. It is inconceivable that this paper or the Program could provide systematic support for the whole range of activities called delinquency prevention. To do so would so diffuse energies and attention as to negate the possibility of any particular gain. Accordingly, the paper concentrates on a few options. It is a proposal about what is important in delinquency prevention and about directions for delinquency prevention to move in.

1.2 Prevention in Historical Perspective

Rampant misconduct of young persons characterizes every period of recorded history. After compiling reports by many writers of youthful behavior from medieval times to the present, Lamar Empey concluded that flaunting by the young of adult standards probably has not increased over the centuries. In 17th century France, schools were sites of duels, brawls, mutinies, and beatings of teachers by pupils. Drawing from many sources, Empey noted the 19th century Americans:

> "exhibited fright and pessimism over youth behavior. No decent man could safely walk the streets of San Francisco; the term hoodlum was coined to describe the members of teenage gangs" (Empey, 1978, p 2).

An author of the time declared:

> "Crime, especially in its more violent forms, and among the young, is increasing steadily and is threatening to bankrupt the young" (as quoted by Empey, 1978, p 2).

What has changed, according to Empey, are the ways that adults define and react to misbehavior of the young. Behavior found acceptable in the middle ages and only "partially lamented" in the 17th and 18th centuries became, in the 19th century, "cause for great alarm." Behavior involving sex, drugs, vice, and violence had been common among children throughout the centuries; what has steadily increased is our concern over the behavior. The increasing concern has accompanied changes in the ways young persons are treated. In Empey's account, childhood and delinquency were invented together and reflect the same set of changes.

Abandonment, serious beating, and general indifference to children gradually gave way to a recognition and concern for childhood as "a special and highly protected phase of the life cycle." Some religious beliefs added the view that children need not only protection and nurture but training to control the innate disposition to evil that characterizes all humans. Another related view was that poverty and vice are synonymous.

In the wake of changing views of childhood came the organization of child-rearing as a distinct practice, with rules and guidebooks. Parents were admonished that their cultivation of the child was a grave responsibility, requiring strict discipline. Schooling became a part of the formula for child-rearing, at first for relatively few and not for long, but gradually for increasing numbers of youth and for longer and longer periods of time. Increasing restriction on the employment of children accompanied the trend for more schooling.

A prominent component of the emerging ideas of childhood and the organization of child-rearing, in Empey's account (1978, pp 51-54), was the "ideal child," which became, in the 19th century, the "standard by which undesirable conduct by children and failure by unworthy parents was evaluated." Given the innate inclination of children to wrong-doing, the rearing of the ideal child required "keeping a close watch over children and never permitting them to be alone" (p 54), disciplining them rather than pampering them, requiring them to be modest, bringing them up to be "diligent in some lawful business" (p 54), and perhaps most important, requiring obedience to authority.

> "Thus, not being able to govern themselves, children should be obedient, submissive to authority, hardworking, self-controlled, modest, and chaste" (p 55).

Here is where the irony arises. Out of an increasing concern for the welfare and nurture of children arose an ideal and delinquency, as it came to be understood in America in the 20th century, came to encompass more and more departures from that ideal. In the face of new scientific ideas, the equation of deviance with sin gave way to the equation of deviance with failures of early child-rearing and the corruption of community growth. The equation of deviance with poverty persisted. The equation of deviance with membership in an ethnic or racial minority was added. Protecting young persons meant curtailing their independence. Describing the work of turn-of-the-century reformers, Anthony Platt has written that

> "the child savers were more concerned with restriction than liberation...they were most active and successful in extending government control over a whole range of youthful activities that had previously been ignored or dealt with informally.... The consolidation of the dependent status of "problematic" youth was complete. Young people were denied the option of withdrawing from or changing the institutions which governed their lives. Their opposition to or disenchantment with the school or reformatory or recreation center was treated as a problem of personal maladjustment which evoked "therapeutic" programs from the child savers" (Platt, 1969, pp 99-100).

In the meantime, a variety of affiliations with adults and pathways to adulthood disappeared for most youth. Where young persons had been needed producers in a largely rural society, they became mostly consumers in an industrial one. Apprenticeships, the standard route to an occupation in earlier times, steadily declined. The changing structure of occupations, along with efforts to reduce the exploitation of children at work, put many youth out of the workplace entirely. Home and school became the places for children to be. Segregation by age increased and increasingly was refined. Societies that had few or no words to distinguish a 6-year-old from a 26-year-old person came to distinguish preschoolers, primary schoolers, preteens, teenagers, and so forth. Changes in some parts of the social system thus generated problems for young persons. Many complementary changes that would *solve* these problems have yet to occur.

The discovery of children has not been an unmixed blessing for those discovered. In their transformation from objects of indifference to objects of great concern, they also have become objects of intense scrutiny. Relieved from exploitation and the necessity of assuming adult burdens at an early age, they also have been deprived of many associations with adults and of several pathways to adult status. Having become the subject of an ideal, their every departure from it is noted, often as "delinquency."

Growing concern for the welfare of the young, creation of an ideal against which to judge individual children and youth, and greater surveillance of their activities have contributed to a steadily increasing urgency attached to the search for ways to prevent delinquency. Two lessons from past thought and practice can help in understanding the state-of-the-art in prevention today.

First, the match between causal explanations of delinquent behavior and prevention practices historically has ranged from logical to nonexistent. Typically, programs have lagged behind theory in both their inception and their discontinuance. As will become apparent in the review in Chapter 2, conversion of theory into prevention practice still is a highly uneven process, and cessation of a practice may not occur until long after the logic that justified it has been discredited. In short, there is a gap between current practice in delinquency prevention and contemporary theory and research findings. Recognizing the nature of the gap is a first step toward narrowing it. This volume is intended to further that recognition.

Second, practitioners and scholars once took seriously many explanations of deviant behavior that today are seen as ludicrous relics of misguided thinking. It once was exceedingly clear to many persons that children who caused trouble were possessed by the Devil, so the key to delinquency prevention was exorcism. It once was exceedingly clear to many persons that children who caused trouble inherited the tendency from

parents or grandparents, so the key to delinquency prevention ranged from incarceration to sterilization. It once was exceedingly clear to many persons that children who caused trouble were biological throwbacks to an earlier stage of evolution, so the key to delinquency prevention was early identification of ape-like features. Beliefs like these died hard. Frequently, they ceased being topics of serious discussion and became targets of derision only after decades of mounting contrary evidence. Faced with an alarming "youth problem," our ancestors were loathe to part with any promising solution. Many people today regard the problem as even more alarming and want desperately to have solutions in hand. How many of the answers of today eventually will receive the derision we now confer on some of the thought of the past?

There are modern "solutions" that many already would regard as just as bizarre and unsatisfactory as some ideas from the distant past. Notable examples are the adrenalin experiment and transmitter implant suggestion described in Chapter 2. Most modern prevention methods are less extreme than these, but many have serious demonstrated flaws, and even the most promising approaches should be subject to continuing critical examination. The lesson from history calls for humility, the willingness to seek out evidence *for and against* currently held solutions and to adjust our practice in light of the evidence. Sufficient evidence already exists to justify abandoning some types of current delinquency prevention programs. Implementation of the remaining types should include methodical steps to test both the effects of the program and validity of their rationales.

1.3 Delinquency Prevention Among Youth Programs

To distinguish prevention from other activities, a spectrum of programs can be described in terms of general or specific outcomes sought, and in terms of general or specific populations addressed. At one end of this spectrum, there are general youth development programs, which are addressed to the population of all youth and are justified by widely valued benefits desired for all youth: Educational attainment; productive and gainful employment; rewarding participation in cultural, recreational, and avocational pursuits; responsible and fruitful involvement in the maintenance and governance of families and communities; provision of service to others; and so on.

Next is a class of special youth development programs, or affirmative action programs, which are justified by the same benefits as the general youth development programs but are structured to extend such benefits to specific populations which, for historical, situational, personal, and other reasons, have not had access to them. Increasing equity of opportunity is a large part of the justification. The target populations tend to be large, such as unemployed youth.

Next are prevention programs, including delinquency prevention as described here. They are directed not to increasing a general benefit as such but to reducing the incidence of a specific form of trouble, such as drug or alcohol abuse, malnutrition, communicable disease, suicide, or delinquent behavior. These forms of trouble share the characteristics that the risk of encountering or being involved in the trouble is widespread in the youth population and that it is better to avoid the trouble than to deal with it once it becomes visible.

Public health programs provide a useful image of these prevention programs. One works in the general population, first, to remove specific causes of or contributors to a specific form of trouble and, second, attempts to provide to members of the general population resources specifically designed to increase their resistance to, or ability to avoid, specific forms of trouble. For delinquency prevention, the analogy breaks down at points; delinquency has not been traced to a virus, a food contaminant, a swamp, or a cooling system. But the basic image of working in general populations with specific strategies directed to specific forms of trouble appears to be central to prevention.

Classifying programs affecting general populations as delinquency prevention proceeds from an assumption that offenders are not basically different from nonoffenders. This is contrary to the assumption underlying clinical and many other individually targeted treatment programs. Considering the evidence presented in Chapter 2 of this volume, we take the position that delinquents are not distinguishable from nondelinquents on the basis of personal traits. We argue further that presumed connections between delinquency and many background factors (social class and broken homes, for example) have been grossly exaggerated. The predominant bearing of these factors is not on the commission of delinquent acts, but on official reactions to those acts. Self-report data collected over the past 25 years have shown repeatedly that delinquent behavior is widespread among youth of all social classes and backgrounds. While recognizing that delinquency-producing factors are experienced more by some youth than by others, we expressly reject what has been termed "the dualistic fallacy," the notion that there is a type of young person who becomes delinquent and another type who does not.

Finally, there is an array of more specialized supportive, remedial, corrective, and rehabilitative programs aimed, usually as a reaction to specific needs and problems of specific, and relatively limited, populations. Diversion of offenders from the justice system is one such program; physical rehabilitation of accident victims is another. It may be noted that to date, in the name of delinquency prevention, there has been a heavy investment in this type of program, presumably because delinquency was thought to be a personal or individual problem occurring in a limited population.

The central meaning of delinquency prevention is to preserve or retain youth in a relatively law-abiding status.* On the one hand, delinquency prevention programs should bear more specifically on delinquent behavior than many of the youth development programs appear to. On the other hand, delinquency prevention programs should operate so as to reduce instances of visible trouble rather than coming into play only as a response to visible trouble. It remains to be seen, of course, whether such programs exist or can be designed. We will describe programs that appear to meet these requirements.

From the preceding point of view, we are led to a general description of the activities which, for the purposes of this paper, will be regarded as delinquency prevention. This is not an attempt to specify concrete activities that are thought to be effective in reducing delinquent behavior; that is the purpose of later sections. Rather, the purpose is to find some general grounds for limiting the discussion, so that it may attain greater focus, depth, and direction. Our description of delinquency prevention is derived from that which appeared in OJJDP's second annual analysis of Federal delinquency prevention programs:

> "'Delinquency Prevention' refers to activities designed to reduce the incidence of delinquent acts and directed to youth who are not being dealt with as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system" (OJJDP, 1977a).

Three criteria are presented. First, the activity should be *designed.* "Designed" is not the same thing as "intended" or "hoped"; there are rather more stringent criteria for designs. Second, the activity should be designed to reduce delinquent *acts.* While rates of contact and arrest should be affected, the first purpose is to reduce the commission of acts, from which the first and main social costs flow.

The third criterion specifically excludes probation, incarceration, forms of diversion, and other activities in which youth are being dealt

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* "Delinquency" frequently is defined in terms of non-law-abiding behavior. Thus, Gibbons prefers to view delinquency as "that behavior prohibited by the delinquency laws" (1970, p 7), and Hirschi writes that "delinquency is defined by acts, the detection of which is thought to result in punishment of the person committing them by agents of the larger society" (1969, p 47). These authors and others acknowledge that laws and their enforcement are not constant across time nor uniform from place to place, thereby rendering the legalistic definition imprecise. However, attempts at alternative definitions have introduced judgmental elements that are difficult to specify in concrete terms, as well as other difficulties. For the purposes of this volume, the reader may keep the legalistic definition in mind as a rough guide to what is meant by "delinquency" but should recognize its limitations. A key point is that the modifier "delinquent" refers to *acts*, not persons.

with as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system. These activities are so clearly a reaction to actual or alleged delinquent acts, that they do not belong in the terrain of delinquency prevention. In many cases, to be sure, such activities are intended to reduce delinquent acts -- or at least repeated contact with authorities -- subsequent to a youth's contact with juvenile justice. This is a worthy intent. However, not only is no useful purpose served by calling the activities prevention but there is some risk of distorting the crucial sense of prevention by applying the term to those activities. As in the analogy with public health, the preventive approach suggested here is not work with the population already stricken but with the general population -- first, in selective efforts to remove factors that contribute to the problem and, second, in efforts to provide resources that increase resistance to the problem. Thus, prevention is different in kind from diversion, remediation, and rehabilitation.

What other activities remain in or are left out of the discussion as a result of this description can be suggested only generally at this point. For example, it appears that general youth development activities would be excluded by the design criterion unless there were some plausible, specific, supported argument, specifically reflected in the program design, that the program should affect delinquent behavior. Beyond that, however, the case must be examined in detail. The function of the description is to indicate the grounds for that examination: That is, what approaches are likely to have an influence on delinquent acts, how may they be applied specifically in a program *design*, and how can they be arranged to reduce trouble rather than reacting to it?

1.4 The Need for Experimentation

In light of the current state of delinquency theory and practice and the intent to advance practice, we propose that delinquency prevention inherently is an experimental undertaking, to which experimental procedures should be applied. Experimentation is not a permissive idea. While a deliberate diversity often is desirable in the experimental mode, experimentation is not a call for attempting every sort of thing that someone can think of in the hope of finding something that works. Moreover, there are lines of programming that still are being supported by significant resources, that have been found both theoretically and practically fruitless in repeated trials, and that ought to be abandoned promptly in favor of more promising approaches.

In contrast to the prevalent pattern of widely diverse practice and minimal evaluation, experimentation calls for repeated, systematic attempts to assess the current theory and evidence, to choose a few of the most promising approaches, to apply those approaches methodically in programs, to evaluate them well and thoroughly, and to use information about processes and outcomes to decide whether what was tried should be abandoned,

refined and tried again, or expanded. In contrast to diverse repetitious, unevaluated practice, the object is to try a few approaches rigorously enough to find out what works and what does not.

1.5 Limits of the Paper

This volume draws on substantial field experience (spanning a period of 7 years) working with delinquency prevention and youth development projects, and on an extensive review of the literature; however, the treatment of theory and practice is not intended to be exhaustive. The task here is a practical one: To derive practical options that are well-informed by theory and research and can be applied now. To establish a focus and direction of movement, we have made provisional and practical choices among theoretical arguments, evidence, and program options. Our experience and cues in the literature have guided us. We hope that the choices made will be found to have been wise ones. We trust that the volume will be received and responded to in that light.

A general prevention strategy should draw from the strongest and most practically promising elements of delinquency theory and research. The accumulated knowledge and program experience in the field make it possible to propose a general approach, some promising forms of programming, and principles and suggestions for practice. We do *not* claim that combining every ingredient proposed will produce a specific model program that will be feasible in all circumstances and will uniformly provide predictable results in reducing delinquent behavior. To produce feasible and effective programs, the ingredients will have to be elaborated and adapted to given circumstances and tested and refined over time.

This volume is not a cookbook. The state-of-the-art in preventing delinquency has not become so exact as that in preparing a casserole, partly because less of the recipe is generalizable from one situation to another. From a review of literature and from experience working in communities, the authors attempt to present elements of strategies that should be applicable in roughly similar ways in a variety of local contexts. Of necessity, this attempt has produced a level of generality that demands creativity from readers in translating the points made into concrete programs for their respective communities. We offer help in avoiding typical pitfalls in this translation process, but nowhere in the volume do we offer a specific formula for guaranteed success. The reader is left with the task of fitting the approaches presented to the conditions under which he or she must work, of which the local boiling point is only one.

This volume also is not a catalog of model or illustrative programs. A more detailed and specific treatment of points raised here will appear in three forthcoming working papers: A Guide for Delinquency Prevention Programming Through Selective Change in School Organizations; A Guide for Delinquency Prevention Programming Based on Educational Activities; and

A Guide for Delinquency Prevention Programming Based on Work and Community Service Activities.

With respect to management, planning, negotiating, and allocating resources, the concern of this volume is only with problems peculiar to the approach and programs recommended. Other sources should be consulted for general discussions of these matters.

Because delinquent behavior is not confined to a limited or distinct population, program initiatives should be amenable to implementation on a scale affecting the majority of the Nation's youth. This does not require sweeping reforms of American society.* In suggesting change, we try to identify specific organizational features and processes that bear on delinquency and that, although they are embedded in larger social and economic systems, might be altered selectively and in stages.

We attempt to find initiatives that are feasible over a term of 3 to 10 years and that can be improved incrementally and experimentally. Although this term is short from the standpoint of observable organizational change, it may strike persons who want immediate visible results as intolerably drawn out. For this reason, a school official or other representative of an organization facing a crisis may be more receptive to "instantaneous" tactics. Frequent reactions to trouble are disciplinary crackdowns and target-hardening (stronger locks and chain-link window covers). The main appeal of these tactics probably lies in the speed with which they can be implemented; their track record for effectiveness in prevention is poor. In situations that cause officials to demand instant action, two alternatives are recommended. One is very narrowly focused organizational change; in some cases, a single school policy that appears to be contributing to the problem can be altered almost overnight. The other is a self-contained service program of the sort described in Chapter 4.

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* It is possible to infer from the literature reviewed a need for comprehensive reforms of American institutions. Without greatly overextending the theoretical statements, one could, for example, argue for a massive reorganization both of education and work to provide all youth much earlier entry into adult work roles, interspersed with life-long education. Such proposals have been made. As goals for the future and as general options for national attention, such proposals may well be essential to the construction of a wise policy both for youth and for the country. However, this paper is directed towards changes of smaller magnitude.

1.6 Arrangement of the Paper

This paper is intended to reflect the experimental approach described above. Chapter 2 reviews contemporary theories of delinquency, research evidence, and their implications for delinquency prevention programming. For the most part, existing general summaries and reviews were drawn on to prepare the chapter; the main purpose was to draw out implications for programs. A number of existing programs are rejected outright as demonstrably ineffective or unpromising for delinquency prevention. Further choices are made among program possibilities, to limit the field enough to give systematic consideration to what remains within it.

The subsequent chapters then concentrate on those options. In them, we present two broad categories of delinquency prevention initiatives. First, in Chapter 3, delinquency prevention is considered as efforts towards selective organizational change undertaken to alter organizational contributors to delinquency and to strengthen organizational supports for law-abiding behavior. This is the most direct, if rarest, application of the delinquency theory and research that has been reviewed. It is most amenable to implementation on the scale required by delinquency prevention, and it offers the prospect of durable gains in prevention rather than perennial efforts in remediation.

Organizational change initiatives impose a set of implementation problems and requirements different from those involved in the more common self-contained programs offering services direct to individual youth. By virtue of limited use in the past, the necessary implementation tactics may be unfamiliar and undeveloped. However, if these tactics receive even a small proportion of the investment that has gone into remedial programs to date, they should improve rapidly.

The second broad category of delinquency prevention initiatives to be presented is adapted to the more conventional self-contained program of services direct to selected populations of youth. Under past and present policies, this is the prevailing mode of support for delinquency prevention, so some attempt must be made to take advantage of the opportunities presented. Chapter 4 proposes a form of the self-contained service program that seems consonant with the approach used here, that can be implemented on a small scale over a short term while allowing groundwork to be laid and methods to be learned for application on the larger scale needed for delinquency prevention. In large part, the program form suggested simply integrates some existing program components, revising them on some counts to bring them into line with the approach and its underlying principles.

While the two forms are presented separately, it will be seen that they are related. They employ similar principles and theoretical underpinnings. In addition direct services programs can serve as benchheads

for organizational change initiatives, and organizational change initiatives may be required to implement the direct services programs properly.

Chapter 5 discusses some issues of implementation for the recommended programs, concentrating on anticipated problems and tactics for engaging key actors in organizational change.

2. CONTEMPORARY DELINQUENCY THEORY AND RESEARCH AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PREVENTION

This chapter contains a selective review of contemporary answers to two broad questions: What causes delinquent behavior? and What can be done to prevent or reduce it?

Explanations of the causes of delinquency and propositions about its prevention tend to flow from three sources. There is a class of explanations and propositions based on "common sense" or "folk" notions of the problem. One example is the assumption that the Devil finds work for idle hands; to keep young people out of trouble, you must keep them busy. Another example is the assumption that youth have uncommon difficulty resisting temptation; to keep them out of trouble, you need stronger locks and more police surveillance.

There is a class of explanations stemming from observed or alleged associations between delinquent behavior and something else. Some of these are accompanied by more or less elaborately developed interpretations. In this category are presumed causal relationships between:

- Dropout and delinquency.
- Psychopathology and delinquency.
- Learning disabilities and delinquency.
- Broken homes and delinquency.
- Maternal deprivation and delinquency.
- Economic hardship and delinquency.

Finally, there is a class of propositions based in systematically developed theories which, in turn, are embedded in broader social science theory. For convenience in presentation, most reviewers have grouped related explanations into categories like the following:

- Labeling and societal reaction theories, which identify a cause of delinquency in stigmatizing responses to certain behaviors (Lemert, Becker).
- Subcultural and differential association theories, which identify a cause of delinquency in the diversity of norms characterizing different groups or segments of the population (Cohen, Miller, Sutherland).

- Strain and opportunity theories, which identify a cause of delinquent behavior in misalignment in the social structure between desirable goals and available means for achieving the goals (Merton, Cloward and Ohlin).

- Bonding, control, and drift theories, which identify a cause of delinquency in weakened bonds to the conventional moral order (Hirschi, Matza, and Reckless).

The three classes of explanation share the common characteristic that they purport to describe causes, presenting factors claimed either to produce or to prevent delinquent behavior. Although the theory-based explanations have received the most attention in the literature, the other purported causal factors have been subject to enough testing and informed debate to allow an evaluative review of all of them.

Material in this review is organized mainly around *applications* of the explanations, rather than around origins or "schools of thought." The material is arranged into the broad categories of: (a) Delinquency and the individual, (b) delinquency and social interaction, and (c) delinquency and social structure. Cardarelli (1975) applied these categories to main thrusts intended by the authors of various causal explanations. In contrast, the approach here is to recognize the ways in which each explanation has been converted to prevention practice, regardless of its author's original intention. The difference is substantial.

Common practice in delinquency prevention does not reflect contemporary theory and research findings. Practice tends to assume that the source of the difficulty is inherent in young persons, while the main strains of theory and research identify the sources of delinquency in social interactions and in the operations of social institutions. Most current practice relies on programs designed to identify and provide remedial services to individuals nominated as being at risk; contemporary explanations argue for various alterations in the operation of social institutions, particularly of education, work, and the family. Research findings over the past 40 years have pointed fairly consistently to the ineffectiveness of preventive or remedial programs targeted on individuals, yet these programs have persisted and proliferated.

Communities, organizations, neighborhoods, and structured settings in which face-to-face interaction regularly occurs are difficult targets to put one's hands on. They have been less popular among program operators than the more easily grasped target of individual youth. The emphasis on programs targeted on individuals has been self-perpetuating. There is a history of this kind of response which provides a repertoire of project designs

that can be implemented on short notice to address urgent local needs. State Planning Agencies and practitioners have at their fingertips no corresponding repertoire of programs targeted on the operations of institutions.

Several years of attempts to convey the implications of contemporary theory and research findings suggest that program operators tend to adopt the language of delinquency prevention as social change without making any corresponding modification of their actual practice. Practitioners who deliver services to individual youth have displayed a talent for taking in stride material that runs contrary to their customary approach.

First, they frequently interpret evidence that their approach is ineffective to apply only to "what others are doing incorrectly that I am doing right." Last year in New England, a consultant confronted a room full of practitioners with a barrage of findings indicating that counseling was either ineffective or counterproductive for delinquency prevention. When he asked for comments from the audience, eight hands went up immediately. No one quarreled with the findings. Instead, the typical response was, "That's not at all surprising, considering the way so many people do counseling."

Second, practitioners can find justification for what they are doing currently in virtually any theory of delinquent behavior, even one implying an approach that is radically different from theirs. The organization of the review takes account of practitioners' ability to convert macrotheory into micropractice. For example, it recognizes that strain theory, which identifies causes of delinquent behavior in the social structure, can be construed to justify some forms of individual counseling. Programs targeted on individuals, interaction, and the social structure all may claim a basis in a single body of theory.

The critical review in this chapter provides information for sorting prevention programs into five categories: (a) Those that should be rejected as having no defensible basis in theory or research; (b) those that should be rejected because they represent inappropriate or ineffective implementation of a defensible explanation of delinquency; (c) those whose merit is highly questionable in light of evidence to date; (d) those that offer short-term benefits or benefits to limited numbers at substantial cost; and (e) those with promise of broad and lasting benefits at moderate cost.

2.1 Delinquent Behavior and the Individual

2.1.1 Explanations Focusing on Individual Characteristics

Some explanations of individual deviance are irrefutable. These are not the topics of this section. Explanations that cannot be disproved take the following form: "He fights because he is pugnacious," or "She disobeys because she is unsubmissive," or "He refuses to respond to

treatment because he is recalcitrant." Using Roget's Thesaurus as the sole source, one could construct a totally irrefutable theory of delinquency. Although circular reasoning still plagues some current thinking about individual characteristics that produce delinquent behavior, a number of explanations at least partially have avoided this pitfall. Interpretations cease being irrefutable and become testable when the purported causal factors can be measured independently of the behavior being explained. This is true to varying degrees of explanations' finding roots of delinquent behavior in biology, maladjusted or psychopathic personalities, and learning disabilities.

2.1.1.1 Biology and Delinquent Behavior

Quite appropriately, hardly any recent programs have focused on biological determinants of delinquent behavior. For this reason, their treatment here is brief. In 1970, Don Gibbons concluded his examination of such explanations as follows:

> "The plain fact is that the many years of biogenic exploration of delinquency have not yielded any valid generalizations about biological factors in deviance" (Gibbons, 1970, p 75).

A 1977 review commissioned by the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention was summarized in the introduction to Preventing Delinquency: A Comparative Analysis of Delinquency Prevention Theory in these words:

> "The paper on biological factors in crime and delinquency provides an extensive review of the available research literature. On balance, the author concludes that this literature offers few strong policy suggestions for prevention programming. Biological factors seem to always be mediated by social processes which are more amenable to social intervention. Thus, it is not the biology of the hyperactive child which "causes" delinquency, but the unappropriate social response of parents, teachers and others to the behavior of these children. Early diagnosis of medical or nutritional problems coupled with humane and constructive social responses can generally eliminate the potential for biological differences to become defined as delinquency. Despite the overall negative character of the review of biological research on delinquency, this paper is quite important because of the continued 'rediscovery' of alleged biological causes of crime. In most cases the 'rediscoveries' are not supported by firm research findings or they represent ideas long since discredited in the scientific literature" (NIJJDP, 1977, p 9).

2.1.1.2 Personality and Delinquent Behavior

Defining personality as a set of predispositions to act readily accommodates the popular assumption that disordered behavior means a disordered personality. More specifically, psychopathic, sociopathic or maladjusted personalities have been viewed as causes of many forms of delinquent behavior. More cautious proponents of this view have suggested that personality merely sets the stage, making a delinquent response to certain social situations more likely. Either way, delinquents are presumed to have a higher incidence of personality problems than nondelinquents.

Attempts to measure personality disorders (apart from merely inferring them from delinquent behavior) have taken several forms. They include responses to Rorschach and other projective items, score configurations on structured psychological inventories, and symptomatic diagnosis by practitioners, parents, and teachers. In 1949, Dr. Edward Glover of the Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency testified in London before a royal commission that many potential murderers could be identified between the ages of two and a half and eight.

> "There are so-called projective techniques of examination which are valuable, because they eliminate subjective bias on the part of the examiner and of the case examined. They have now arrived at a state of, not perfection, but adequacy, so that it is possible to take a child who is to all appearances merely an uninhibited child, and discover that he is potentially violent" (cited by Hakeem, 1966, p 455).

A more popular approach relies on scores on objective tests, such as the California Psychological Inventory and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Personality traits are inferred from respondents' answers to questions concerning habits, family and marriage, sexual attitudes, religions, political attitudes (including law and order), and social attitudes. Certain score profiles are believed to be associated with an increased likelihood of delinquent behavior.

Probably the most widely used means for diagnosing "predelinquents" have been impressionistic assessments by teachers, parents, and others in regular contact with young persons. Occasionally, those making the assessments have received checklists to help them spot symptoms of disorder. An extreme illustration comes from a U.S. Children's Bureau project in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1943. Parents, schools, churches, neighborhood organizations, police, and social agencies were urged to refer children in need of treatment. To make their selection more systematic, the following list (cited by Hakeem, 1966, p 458) of precursors to delinquency was provided:

Bashfulness
Boastfulness
Boisterousness
Bossiness
Bullying
Cheating
Cruelty
Crying
Daydreaming
Deceit
Defiance
Dependence
Destructiveness
Disobedience
Drinking
Eating disturbances
Effeminate behavior (in boys)
Enuresis
Fabrication
Failure to perform assigned tasks
Fighting
Finicalness
Gambling
Gate-crashing
Hitching rides
Ill-mannered behavior
Impudence
Inattentiveness
Indolence
Lack of orderliness
Masturbation
Nailbiting
Negativism
Obscenity
Overactivity
Over-masculine behavior (in girls)
Profanity
Quarreling
Roughness
Selfishness
Sex perversion
Sex play
Sexual activity
Shifting activities
Show-off behavior
Silliness
Sleep disturbances
Smoking
Speech disturbances
Stealing
Stubbornness
Sullenness
Tardiness
Tattling
Teasing
Temper displays
Tics
Timidity
Thumbsucking
Truancy from home
Truancy from school
Uncleanliness
Uncouth personalities
Underactivity
Undesirable companions
Undesirable recreation
Unsportsmanship
Untidiness
Violation of street-trades regulations
Violation of traffic regulations

No matter what diagnostic device is used, the assumption is that there are personality differences between delinquents and nondelinquents. Evidence accumulated over a 40-year period does not support this assumption.

In 1950, Karl Schuessler and Donald Cressey reviewed 113 studies of personality differences between criminals and noncriminals. These investigators concluded that:

> "the doubtful validity of many of the obtained differences, as well as the lack of consistency in the combined results, makes it impossible to conclude from these data that criminality and personality elements are associated" (quoted by Gibbons, 1970, p 79).

In 1967, Gordon Waldo and Simon Dinitz reviewed another 94 studies completed between 1950 and 1965. Although a few of the studies claimed statistically significant differences between criminals and noncriminals on personality inventories, the reviewers did not find these persuasive. They noted, for example, that one item on a commonly used inventory is "I have never been in trouble with the law." Commenting on the results of the two reviews, Gene Kassebaum wrote:

> "It is striking then that two reviews of published studies of personality differences between the law-violating and the law-abiding, which taken together reviewed 207 studies ranging over several decades of research, are unable to provide any firm basis for the claim that there are distinguishable and characteristic features in the personality of the offender" (1974, p 52).

In a more recent study, each of the four personality factors from the California Personality Inventory was found to be unrelated to any criminal offense (Bailey and Lott, as cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts 9 (3): 99-100, 1976).

Edwin Schur has pointed out that in the studies claiming to find personality differences between officially identified delinquents and nondelinquents:

> "there is no way of determining whether any personality 'findings' represent 'causes' of the delinquency or have developed as a consequence of the youth's involvement in delinquency.....Furthermore, where the individual's delinquency involvement is known to the investigator, the dangers of circularity and prejudgment in diagnosis are very great" (1973, p 40).

With respect to less structured diagnostic methods, Michael Hakeem took the list of traits and behaviors used in the St. Paul project (above) as a point of departure in a review of psychiatric literature. Hakeem found repeated criticism from those within the field that: (a) Such traits and behaviors could not be measured precisely enough for use in diagnosis; (b) even if accurate measurement were possible, there are no established cutoff points for sorting abnormal from normal; (c) with respect to several traits, experts do not agree whether their *presence* or their *absence* is the more dangerous sign; and (d) this kind of diagnosis is sufficiently inexact that virtually any young persons can be identified as predelinquent. Hakeem characterized his findings as reflecting "the vast confusion and conflict which prevail in psychiatry when it comes to a consideration of children's behavior and personality traits" (Hakeem, 1966, p 460).

Even if Hakeem overstated the conflict surrounding diagnosis, or if the situation is less confused today than it was 13 years ago, the question of a link between personality and delinquent behavior remains. Contrary to the generally assumed relationship between delinquency and disorder, at least two writers have suggested that delinquent behavior may be functional in *avoiding* personality disorders.

Seymour Halleck lists several psychological advantages of deviance, including the opportunity to use creatively abilities and skills not ordinarily utilized, to change in a positive direction, and to locate the source of oppression outside the self and decrease the blame of self (cited by NIJJDP, 1977, pp 87-88). After describing the school as "rife with provocations for delinquent behavior," Martin Gold depicts disruption and delinquency as appropriate ways to rescue self-esteem. Gold then points out that for some young persons, even these avenues are blocked.

> "Where there are warm parent-adolescent relationships that might be ruptured. . . and other resources that might be withheld, disruptive behavior is not displayed because it bears more costs than benefits.
>
> "When strong controls effectively counter strong provocations to be disruptive, delinquency is not a defense against a derogated self-image. Unable to cope by engaging in disruptive and delinquent behavior, a youth is likely to feel a great deal of anxiety and may take flight from reality.....Alternatives to disruption and delinquent behavior may include various forms of mental illness, particularly pervasive anxiety" (Gold, 1978, p 26).

Considering the review conclusions presented earlier and the existence of two *opposite* rationales concerning a link between personality and delinquency, an assumption that no relationship has been documented appears prudent.

2.1.1.3 Learning Disabilities and Delinquent Behavior

The concept of "learning disabilities" was developed in the early 1960s to describe a category of academic difficulties not due to mental retardation or physical handicaps. As defined in Federal funding guidelines, children with special learning disabilities are those who exhibit disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic. The disorders include perceptual handicaps, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, and minimal brain dysfunction. They do not include learning problems that are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or to environmental disadvantage (Murray, 1976, p 12).

By 1975, plausible arguments had emerged linking learning disabilities not only to poor school performance but to delinquent behavior. Charles Murray describes two rationales used to support such a link. The simpler of these has been termed the "susceptibility hypothesis." It posits that certain types of learning disabilities are associated with poor ability to learn from experience, poor reception of social clues, and general impulsiveness. These conditions lead to decreased effectiveness of the usual social sanctions and rewards which, in turn, leads to an increased susceptibility to delinquent behavior.

A more elaborate rationale, termed the "school failure hypothesis," is depicted in Figure 2-1. In this causal sequence, learning disabilities pose a double threat to self-image and also lead to associations with peers who are hostile to school and prone to delinquency. The negative self-image creates a need for compensating successes, and a probable avenue for these is delinquent acts. The peer associations increase the likelihood of school dropout, which provides greater opportunity for delinquent behavior and creates economic incentives to commit crimes.

In December 1975, the American Institute of Research (AIR) completed a study for NIJJDP examining the link between learning disabilities and juvenile delinquency. The research team reviewed literature, interviewed 46 consultants to obtain information on unpublished theory, and took a detailed inventory of demonstration projects. The team concluded that the case for a link between learning disabilities and delinquency was made almost exclusively by practitioners, who based their beliefs primarily on observation of cases they had treated. Academicians generally were skeptical about the existence of a gross relationship and about some of the causal links portrayed in the rationale. For example,

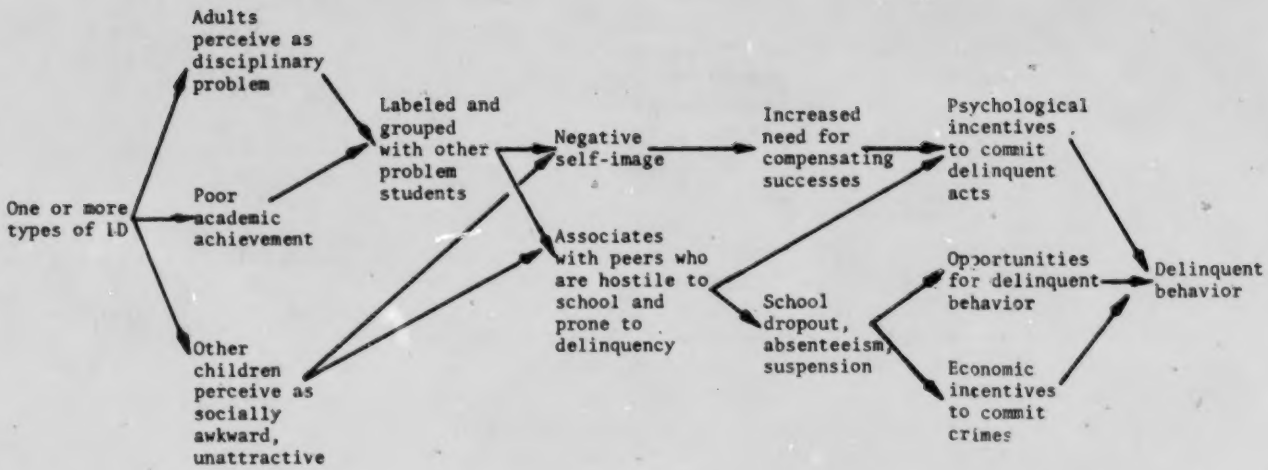
One or more types of LD
Adults perceive as disciplinary problem
Poor academic achievement
Other children perceive as socially awkward, unattractive
Labeled and grouped with other problem students
Negative self-image
Associates with peers who are hostile to school and prone to delinquency
Increased need for compensating successes
School dropout, absenteeism, suspension
Psychological incentives to commit delinquent acts
Opportunities for delinquent behavior
Economic incentives to commit crimes
Delinquent behavior

Figure 2-1. The "School Failure" Rationale Linking Learning Disabilities and Delinquency
Source: Murray, 1976, p 26

Delbert Elliott mentioned his findings that dropping out of school typically is followed by a decrease, rather than an increase, in delinquent behavior.

Although quantitative studies have reported incidences of learning disabilities among delinquents ranging from 22 to 90 percent, the research team concluded that the "disparity of estimates fairly reflects the disparity of definitions, procedures, and analyses in the studies" (Murray, 1976, p 61). They further concluded that no estimate of the incidence of learning disabilities can be satisfactorily derived from existing studies and that no study yet conducted can even claim to demonstrate that the average delinquent is more likely to suffer from learning disability than his or her nondelinquent counterpart. In sum, the team reported that "the evidence for a causal link is feeble." They recommended that OJJDP support further research and evaluation, rather than program applications predicated on an assumption that a link exists (Murray, 1976, pp 65-72).

Following the AIR recommendation, OJJDP commissioned a 2-year research and demonstration project through the National Center for State Courts. To obtain solid evidence concerning the link between learning disabilities and delinquency, the investigators were asked: First, to determine the prevalence of learning disabilities among a group of adjudicated juvenile delinquent males and among a comparable group of nonadjudicated males in public schools; and, second, to investigate the prevalence of delinquent behavior among learning-disabled and non-learning-disabled youth.

Through interviews and a review of records, the researchers collected data on a sample of 1,692 youth in the areas of Baltimore, Indianapolis, and Phoenix. To compare the prevalence of learning disabilities among adjudicated and nonadjudicated males, the researchers used a subsample of 1,381 12-to 15-year-olds, about one-third of whom had been adjudicated delinquent. This smaller sample allowed matching delinquents and nondelinquents on sex and roughly matching them on age. Uniform criteria were applied to identify those with learning disabilities. The findings paralled the suggestive evidence of earlier studies: Thirty-two percent of adjudicated youth had learning disabilities, compared with only 16 percent of nonadjudicated youth.

To investigate the relative prevalence of delinquent behavior among learning-disabled and non-learning-disabled youth, the researchers again applied uniform criteria to identify those with learning disabilities and administered self-reported delinquency questionnaires to the entire sample of 1,692. The subjects also were asked how many times they had

been picked up by the police. Separate analyses of data for adjudicated and nonadjudicated youth indicated *no significant differences between learning-disabled and non-learning-disabled, either in delinquent behavior or in police contacts.*

In light of their first finding that substantially more adjudicated than nonadjudicated youth have learning disabilities, the investigators proposed an alternative hypothesis, that of differential treatment within the justice system. They suggested that learning-disabled children may be less able to communicate satisfactorily with authorities and that poor school records may weigh heavily in decisions to retain young offenders in the justice system. This would account for the observed differences in adjudication, despite a lack of difference in delinquent behavior and in police contacts (Zimmerman et al, 1978).

Critics in months to come are certain to point to problems with this study, not the least of which is a 65 percent attrition of the sample (due to difficulty in obtaining informed consent forms). Nevertheless, there is no evidence at this point supporting a link between learning disabilities and delinquent behavior. For this reason, as well as for reasons described in the later section on early identification, direct treatment of learning disabilities appears to be an unsuitable form of intervention for the purpose of preventing delinquency.

2.1.1.4 Learning Theory and Delinquent Behavior

In its simplest form, learning theory distinguishes between positive and negative reinforcement of behavior and states that acts that are rewarded (positively reinforced) are more likely to be repeated than acts that are punished or negatively reinforced. The most effective reinforcements are intermittent, rather than automatic; that is, a subject must perform a given act an unpredictable number of times before reward or punishment is forthcoming. Beginning with Pavlov's success in conditioning a dog to salivate, experiments involving simple behaviors in the laboratory have consistently supported this theory.

By this logic, delinquency can be regarded as a consequence of inadequate reward for conforming behavior and inadequate punishment for deviant behavior; enacting and publicizing more severe penalties for certain offenses should deter persons from committing them. Research has shown repeatedly that the relationship between severity and certainty of punishment and commission of offenses is either weak or nonexistent. Speculation to account for these findings has been widespread. An early suggestion was that offenders may inaccurately calculate both their chances of apprehension and its probable consequences. This observation led to a number of studies of the effects of *perceived* certainty and serverity, as well as the impact of punishment received on subsequent deviant behavior. At least five

such studies reported in 1976 and 1977 failed to support the effectiveness of punishment as a deterrent.*

A prominent proponent of learning theory has suggested two conditions that interfere with the deterrent effects of punishment. First, delinquent behavior frequently is accompanied by substantial intermittent positive reinforcements that may outweigh the effects of punishment. Second, ". . .the efficacy of punishment in modifying anti-social patterns is highly dependent on the extent to which the offender is capable of, or provided with, alternative pro-social modes of response that will permit him to attain highly desired social goals" (Albert Bandura, cited in Preventing Delinquency, NIJJDP, 1977, p 94). It also has been pointed out that statutory punishment of necessity always will violate an important tenet of learning theory -- namely, the recommendation that reinforcement follow the act immediately. In a similar vein, Franklin Zimring has suggested that the threat of delayed punishment can be effective only for persons who are oriented towards the future, an orientation that may not be widely held among would-be offenders (cited by Kassebaum, 1974, p 97). Correctional planners and those who make school disciplinary policy may exaggerate the extent to which their own habit of looking ahead prevails in the general population. Techniques of neutralization (Matza) and variations in the degree to which young persons feel they have something to lose (Hirschi) also are relevant to the deterrent effects of punishment. These two points are discussed later in this chapter.

One additional line of reasoning merits comment only because it became the subject of serious research as recently as 10 years ago in the State of New York. In 1962, Gordon Trasler built an explanation of criminal behavior on the premise that social training is merely a form of passive-avoidance conditioning. A rat that has been conditioned to press a lever for food will stop the response after repeated substitution of an electrical shock for the food. The avoidance conditioning comes about, Trasler says, as a result of anxiety or fear that comes to accompany the rat's first muscular movement toward the lever. He adds that the response is harder to extinguish in some rats than in others; some appear inherently less susceptible than others to fear.

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* Three of these were commissioned by the Canadian Law Commission and are reported in Fear of Punishment: Deterrence, Ottawa, 1976, and in the Canadian Journal of Criminology and Corrections, 19(2), 1977. See also William C. Bailey and Ruth P. Lott, 1976; and Patricia G. Erickson, "Deterrence and Deviance: The Example of Cannabis Prohibition," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 67(2):222-232, 1976. All five citations were obtained from Criminal Justice Abstracts, 9(3), 354-360, 1977.

He draws an analogy between this and human social training, wherein we condition children to avoid the response of "criminal behavior" by using threat of punishment as an anxiety-producer. Trasler calls fear largely a physiological process and suggests that susceptibility to fear is variable in humans, just as it is in rats. Those with the least biological susceptibility to fear-conditioning are the ones most likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Trasler, 1962).

Attributing low susceptibility to fear to an adrenalin deficiency, a research team devised a way to translate this line of reasoning into practice. Kassebaum quotes from a report of an experiment by the New York Committee on Criminal Offenders:

> "The central hypothesis of this experiment is that the so-called 'sociopath' has a deficiency in the production of a hormone (adrenalin), and that such deficiency retards the ability to learn inhibiting impulses from fear-producing experiences. Hence, conviction and imprisonment, even when previously experienced, would not be a fear-producing device to inhibit future anti-social conduct (i.e., individual deterrence).
>
> "The Committee has initiated an experiment seeking to explore this hypothesis in terms of *both the extent and duration of increased ability to learn from unpleasant experience* when the hormone, adrenalin, is administered. This experiment is presently being conducted at Clinton Prison under the direction of Ernest G. Poser, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at McGill University in conjunction with the medical staff of Clinton Prison.
>
> "The Committee believes that this research has enormous potential significance in preventing the recidivism of a group heretofore considered hopeless" (State of New York Committee on Criminal Offenders, Report, Albany, June 1968, p 8, as cited by Kassebaum, 1974, p 139).

The focus on effectiveness in this discussion of deterrence should not obscure the need to consider both a moral question and the likelihood of unintended side effects. Attempts to prevent delinquency primarily through criminal sanctions require the assumption that a proper organizing principle for a free and peaceful society is fear of the police. Drawing a lesson from recent requirements for environmental impact studies as precautions against undue disruption of our physical environment, Kassebaum suggests that similar reasoning be applied to laws and law enforcement.

"Resources are not infinite, and their allocation to one task necessarily subtracts something from other possibilities. The thrust of a particular program may (and probably will) generate stress elsewhere and will have to be carefully scrutinized and experimented on to detect hidden costs and damages wrought in its wake. Brute force and mindless assaults on 'problems' in the single-minded pursuit of certain sociopolitical goals are as dangerous to the fragile structure of civil life as they have proven to be on the surface of our physical world.

"These ecological lessons apply to crime control and always have. . . . What are the costs and what are the consequences of applying criminal sanctions to a given class of youth behavior? If for example a high intensity lighting system on all streets, a low-light TV scanning system, electronic monitors on all vehicles, and electronic audio bugs in all houses would reduce crime, would the cost in political and social terms be remotely bearable?" (Kassebaum, 1974, p 144).

2.1.1.5 Programs Focusing on Individual Characteristics

Programs intended to reduce delinquent behavior by improving the personalities, skills, or habits of individual young persons have included the following:

- Casework.
- Individual psychotherapy.
- Group counseling.
- Wilderness programs (Outward Bound).
- Special education programs.
- Behavior modification.

Although a majority of such programs have gone unevaluated, many suitable evaluations have been performed, employing both measurable outcomes and control groups. Two frequently cited examples are the New York City Youth Board Study and the Cambridge-Somerville Study. Both involved large numbers of treatment and control subjects, intensive treatment spanning several years, and long-term followup of offense records. The Youth Board Study employed a combination of casework and psychotherapy; the Cambridge-Somerville study employed casework, with an

emphasis on developing strong one-to-one bonds between youth and practitioner. Both were intended as delinquency prevention projects, and both have had unfavorable evaluations in this regard. Members of the treatment groups were not significantly less likely than members of the control groups to become officially delinquent, during or after the treatment. Jackson Toby has commented on the finding that in the Cambridge-Somerville Study young persons receiving treatment were slightly *more* likely than control subjects to have subsequent convictions.

> "Whereas 41 percent of the 253 boys in the treatment group subsequently were convicted of at least one major crime in a state or federal court, 37 percent of the 253 boys in the control group were so convicted. Considering (a) that treatment began by age 10 for 121 boys and by age 13 for the remaining 132, and (b) that treatment lasted for four years or more for 171 boys, *more* criminality in the treatment group is rather surprising" (Toby, 1968, p 101).

The results of a 30-year followup on the same subjects were reported in 1978, indicating that those in the treatment group, now in their late forties, were disproportionately likely to be experiencing a variety of problems, such as alcoholism and hypertension (McCord, 1978).

In 1978, Dennis Romig completed a review of evaluations of 170 youth-serving projects. He limited the review to programs having measurable outcomes and matched or randomly assigned control groups. Seventy-eight of the projects, involving about 10,000 young persons, focused on individual characteristics and employed one of the six approaches listed above. Romig's findings indicate that the New York Youth Board and Cambridge-Somerville outcomes are the rule, rather than the exception.

Nine of the evaluations reviewed by Romig (besides Cambridge-Somerville) were of projects using casework to reduce delinquent behavior. A total of about 2,700 youth were involved. Results were conclusively negative for all nine projects. One project achieved a reduction in truancy among its clients, and one apparently produced significantly greater police referrals and school disciplinary problems for those treated. None of the rest showed significant differences between treatment and control subjects in offenses or on any other outcome measure. In an earlier review, Dixon and Wright reported favorable evaluations in two out of seven casework projects. However, neither had matched or randomly assigned control groups. These authors concluded that social casework has not proven effective. "Therefore, its use as a delinquency prevention or treatment technique is not encouraged" (Dixon and Wright, 1975, p 20).

Ten of the evaluations covered in Romig's review were of individual psychotherapy programs for about 1,600 youth. For seven of the ten

projects, outcomes for treatment and control subjects were not significantly different. In one project, treatment subjects achieved better school performance and attendance and fewer probation referrals but no reduction in police contacts. In another, youth who had been classified as "amenable" to the treatment achieved significantly better parole performance, while those classified as "nonamenable" had slightly worse parole performance than control subjects. In the tenth project, the only difference was that those treated did slightly worse than controls on academic performance. These findings are in accord with those of the earlier review of similar progress by Dixon and Wright.

The review included 28 group counseling programs for 1,800 young persons. In Romig's words,

> ". . .21 percent of the group counseling studies resulted in positive behavior changes in the subjects involved. This leaves an astounding 79 percent that had no significant difference in behavior or that actually gave negative results" (Romig, 1978, p 68).

Many of these programs were for youth already institutionalized; for these, the behavioral outcome measures used were either infractions within the institutional setting or long-term followup after release. One of the four group counseling evaluations in Dixon and Wright's earlier review showed a favorable behavioral outcome, two showed changes only in a measure of personality, and one indicated no change on any measure.

Three wilderness program evaluations were reviewed by Romig, two of an Outward Bound project and one of a California Forestry program. The Outward Bound evaluations showed reduced recidivism, compared to that of controls at 1-year followup, but no difference at either 9-month or 5-year followup. The Forestry program showed no significant differences between treatment and control subjects. Romig concluded that attitudes and skills acquired in even the best of camping situations will not transfer to the everyday world without explicit followup to facilitate such a transfer.

Of the sixteen academic education projects reviewed by Romig, four reported on outcomes for delinquent behavior, as measured by police contact, incarceration, or recidivism rates. In only one of the four did experimental subjects have lower rates than controls. Four projects of the sixteen produced improvement in performance in at least one academic subject, while one (which relied on behavior modification techniques) produced improved school attendance. Those in the other twelve projects, *including the one that boasted reduced delinquency rates,* showed no significant differences in academic achievement.

Finally, the review included evaluations of fourteen behavior modification projects, involving some 2,000 youth. Ten of the fourteen

produced improvements of very narrow scope, but these did not transfer outside the treatment setting. According to Romig's summary:

> "Behavior modification did work to change certain behaviors, such as school attendance, test scores, promptness, and classroom behavior. However, it did not affect something as global as delinquency or arrest rate" (Romig, 1978, p 20)

Practitioners have recognized the limited generalizability to new settings of reinforced behavior. After finding that four out of six verbally reinforced behaviors did not transfer beyond the interview setting, one of those whose work Romig reviewed suggested a possible way to avoid this kind of disappointment. Citing a 1971 publication by the National Institute for Mental Health, Schur notes that Ralph Schwitzgebel has advocated:

> "the use of various electronic techniques to deal with offenders in the community as an alternative to institutionalization. Thus he cites 'the development, in prototype form, of small personally worn transmitters that permit the continual monitoring of the geographical location of parolees.' A related technique might involve devices worn by the individual that transmit signals to him (rather than the other way around) - possibly using electric shocks to deter him from undesired activity. Indeed, according to Schwitzgebel's account, 'a new field of study may be emerging, variously known as behavioral engineering or behavioral instrumentation, that focuses upon the use of electro-mechanical devices for the modification of behavior' "(Schur, 1973, p 53).

A more modest method to extend the treatment setting into everyday life is to make parents the behavior modification treatment providers. Work in this arena is described later in this chapter.

Practitioners and persons responsible for allocating funds have reacted to negative evaluation findings in a variety of ways. The reactions usually stop short of a decision to abandon certain modes of treatment. A more frequent response is to assume that the underlying rationale is sound and to seek better techniques for translating the rationale into practice.

If a program is demonstrated to be ineffective, a possible explanation is that those who ran it made errors in the way they delivered the treatment. It is a rare practitioner who cannot think of at least one pivotal technique that other practitioners could have used to turn failure into success. Thus, a negative program evaluation comes to be seen as the consequence of a few missing ingredients. This interpretation

contains a grain of truth. Following his review of evaluations, Romig listed several added ingredients that might have made some program outcomes less dismal. These include: Specific behavioral goal setting, improved diagnosis of problems, contingency contracting with clients concerning their goals, posttreatment observation of clients practicing new behaviors in the problem settings, and evaluation and modification of goals in subsequent counseling sessions. At considerable added expense, including funding agency support of long-range followup, Romig's suggestions probably could improve the track record of many programs in achieving certain personal improvements in their clients.

However, the weight of evidence indicates that this is not a promising avenue for improving the practice of delinquency prevention. Many of the treatment modes examined already have the benefit of several decades of refinement and modification, yet they still are ineffective in reducing delinquent behavior. Furthermore, even individual treatment programs that have succeeded in achieving their immediate objectives of improved personality scores, enhanced self-image, better school attendance, and the like generally have had little or no impact on delinquent behavior. Seeking improved techniques in these areas should be justified on grounds other than delinquency prevention. Many characteristics addressed by such programs appear to be unrelated to delinquent behavior; more importantly, the main roots of the problem do not reside in individuals at all.

2.1.2 Explanations Focusing on Environmental Deprivation

The shortest (and most frequently taken) stride towards looking outside the individual for causes of delinquent behavior is to focus on background factors and conditions of the immediate environment. At this level, the roots of the problem are seen in socioeconomic status, family structure, ethnicity, or neighborhood features. Occasionally, this view leads to a plea for economic reform or urban redevelopment. More often, consideration of the social environment serves only to enrich the reasoning used to justify treatment programs of the sort already described. The target of intervention remains the individual, with background and environmental factors brought in to explain the origin of the personality disorders being treated or to identify young persons most in need of attention. Frequently, members of the immediate family join the individual young person as program clients.

2.1.2.1 Socioeconomic Level and Delinquent Behavior

Analyses of official arrest and conviction rates have provided evidence of a link between lower class status and delinquency. Strain and subcultural theories (Merton, Miller, Cohen) have offered a logic to explain why such a link should exist. As a consequence, socioeconomic level has been used widely as a criterion for funding projects and selecting

target populations from which to draw clients.

Data have shown that lower class youth are more likely to be arrested, adjudicated, and retained by the juvenile justice system than are middle- and upper class youth. What is less clear is that delinquent behavior of lower class youth is either more prevalent or more serious than that of other youth. To test growing conjecture that official rates reflect practices of law enforcement and justice agencies more than behavior of youth, a large number of studies in the past 20 years have examined self-reported delinquency. A striking feature of the findings from these studies is their lack of uniformity.

Gold, Erickson and Empey, Slocum and Stone, and Reiss and Rhodes found a higher incidence of self-reported delinquent behavior among lower class youth. Short and Nye; Nye, Short, and Olson; Clark and Wenninger; Akers; and Dentler and Moore found no significant differences in self-reported delinquent behavior across social classes. Voss found a higher incidence of self-reported delinquent behavior among middle-class youth than among lower class youth. Travis Hirschi found that sons of professionals and executives had committed the fewest delinquent acts, but "beyond this, the differences (by social class) are generally small and erratic." Elliott and Voss found a relationship between class and delinquency while their respondents were in junior high school, but not during senior high school. Using an instrument covering a broader range of delinquent acts, Elliott and Ageton reported significant differences between lower class youth and all others in total self-reported delinquency and in predatory crimes against persons, but in none of five other delinquency subscales. West and Farrington found a strong relationship between class and self-reported delinquent behavior among youth in London; Hood and Sparks reported findings of no relationship in studies conducted by others in Norway, Finland, and Canada.*

Not surprisingly, these wide differences in findings have turned many of the researchers into critics of one another's work. Much of the debate has been on methodological grounds. Gold has criticized the work of Nye and Short and others for using self-administered measures of self-reported delinquency, instead of interviews. Hirschi has pointed to flaws in Gold's criticism, while Kassebaum and Elliott and Voss have faulted Hirschi's presentation of data for having excluded part of his sample. Various writers have argued for the superiority of some alternative indicator of social class over the ones chosen by other researchers.

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*For citations and further review of these findings, see Kassebaum, 1974, pp 43-45; Gold, 1970, pp 12-14; Gold, 1963, pp 4-11; Hirschi, 1969, p 75; Elliott and Voss, 1974, pp 78-79; NIJJDP, 1977, pp 22-23.

Some have modified the interpretations reported by others by rearranging their data or repercentaging their tables.

Although sharpened measurement and improved quantitative techniques should eventually help to clear the fog surrounding the relationship between social class and delinquent behavior,* another avenue may have more immediate promise from the standpoint of prevention programming. That avenue lies in assuming that the effects of social class on delinquent behavior are indirect and taking the findings to signify that *there are real differences in the nature of these effects from one community to another and from one youth population to another.*

Recent remarks by several writers point in this direction. Edwin Schur has suggested that the behavioral importance of social class must depend, to some degree, on the ways in which class position is translated into a young person's everyday experiences in the home (Schur, 1973, p 45). Following their review of previous studies, Elliott and Voss speculate that differences between small towns and metropolitan areas may partially explain why some researchers and not others find differences in self-reported delinquency by class. They also note that their own results "suggest that the age composition of the population studied is of crucial importance" (Elliott and Voss, 1974).

During the 1960s, Martin Gold was consistently skeptical of studies that found little or no class differences in delinquent behavior. Nevertheless, the same investigator in 1970 summarized the results of his own additional research as follows:

> "These data indicate that the relationship between social status and delinquent behavior is a real one among boys, but not among girls. But real as the relationship appears to be, it is slight, and official records have exaggerated it. ...These data suggest that the relationship between social status and delinquency should be considered a clue -- a scant one at that -- to the causes of delinquency, and that we need to probe beyond it if we wish to identify the forces which account for much delinquency. <u>They also suggest that treatment and prevention programs aimed exclusively at lower class targets miss a lot of heavily delinquent youngsters</u>" (emphasis added, Gold, 1970).

We indeed take the uneven relationship between class and delinquency as a clue. On the basis of evidence presented here and in subsequent

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*For recent strides towards clarification, see Hindelang, Hirschi, and Weis, 1978; and Elliott and Ageton, 1978.

sections of this volume, we expressly reject both strain theory and subcultural theories as adequate explanations of the link. We propose that the effects of class on delinquent behavior are mediated by other factors that are not constant across time or place. Various authors have mentioned age, sex, family features, and urban/rural differences as possible mediators. What may be more to the point are *institutionalized reactions to the visible artifacts of class*. Paramount among these for young persons are class-related policies and practices in schools. Variation across communities on this count alone could account for the wide differences in reported findings. As an extreme illustration, the evidence from England appears less equivocal than that from the United States. There, three studies conducted between 1968 and 1973 all found self-reported delinquency to be more prevalent among lower class youth.* We suggest that a relatively consistent relationship between socioeconomic status and delinquent behavior is more likely in an area where artifacts of class (e.g., speech, dress, manners) are more highly visible and school tracking is more rigidly practiced than in most communities in the United States.

Another body of research has examined distribution of delinquent behavior by area. In contrast with the findings concerning individual socioeconomic status, evidence that delinquency is more prevalent in predominantly lower and working-class neighborhoods has remained relatively free of contradiction.** In at least one instance, findings *from the same study* included both of the following: First, the incidence of delinquent behavior was significantly higher in low-status areas and, second, there were no significant differences in delinquent behavior by individual social class.*** From this and similar studies, Daniel Glaser concluded that "delinquency is apparently more a function of the average social class level of a neighborhood or school district than of the contrast within the area" (quoted by Strasburg, 1978, p 60).

Following a review of literature, Hindelang, Hirschi and Weis concluded that even the presumed strong relationship between social class and official arrest rates for decades was based solely (and erroneously) on ecological data. Noting that "ecological correlations generally

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*D. J. West and D. P. Farrington conducted the most recent of these and gave citations for the other two (1973, pp 157-159).

**See Preventing Delinquency, NIJJDP, 1977, p 78; and Kassebaum, 1974, pp 53-59.

***Reports by Clark and Wenninger, cited by Elliott and Voss, 1974, p 79; and P. C. and J. E. Kratcoski, 1977, p 161 and pp 169-170.

overestimate individual-level correlations by a substantial margin," these investigators found that "the American literature before 1950 reveals not a *single* individual-level estimate of the SES-official delinquency correlation in samples drawn from the general population" (1978, p 8).

Kratcoski and Kratcoski recently reported findings for high schools that parallel those for ecological areas. The researchers administered value orientation and self-reported delinquency questionnaires to youth samples in three high schools, one with a slight preponderance of middle- and upper class students (54 percent), one with a slight preponderance of lower and working-class students (56 percent), and one with a substantial majority of lower and working-class students (75 percent). They found that the rates of reported delinquent behavior increased significantly as the proportion of lower and working-class youth within the school increased. The mean number of self-reported illegal acts was 7.1 in the first school, 7.9 in the second, and 11.2 in the third. However, there were no significant differences either in total illegal acts or in the number of serious offenses committed by individuals' social class within a given school, nor were there significant differences by class in the importance attached to middle-class values (e.g., being a success, working hard, staying out of trouble). Even though a substantially higher number of serious offenses occurred in the school with predominantly lower and working-class students, the lower/working class students were not disproportionately responsible for the offenses (Kratcoski and Kratcoski, 1977, pp 166-170). One interpretation of these findings is that disciplinary and tracking policies, staffing practices, and curriculum features in predominantly lower class schools may tend to be more alienating than those in other schools. School policies and practices that may generate delinquent behavior are described at length in Chapter 3.

The findings presented in this section imply that the causes of delinquent behavior reside more in *settings*, such as schools and neighborhoods, than in individuals. This implication is pursued further in the sections dealing with programs targeted on interaction and institutions. With respect to programs targeted on individuals, the lesson of this evidence, at a minimum, is that *individual socioeconomic status is an inappropriate criterion for selecting clients*. Youth populations at risk may be defined as "all youth living in a certain deprived neighborhood" or "all youth attending a particular school." They should *not* be defined as "all lower class youth in a community" or "all lower class youth in a school."*

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*We recognize that this recommendation directly contradicts a suggestion contained in Volume I of Preventing Delinquency, NIJJDP, 1977, p 78.

2.1.2.2 The Family and Delinquent Behavior

> "DEAR ABBY: When a kid goes wrong, would you say it was due to his environment or heredity - D.J. in Camden, N.J.
>
> "DEAR D.J.: It's a toss-up. But one thing is certain. His parents will get blamed for both"*

> "Though there is much disagreement about the countless factors that play a part in predisposing a child to delinquency, scholars and other researchers are agreed on the overwhelming significance of family life and the home in contributing to delinquent behavior" (Bloch and Flynn, 1956, p 161).

This contention appears in a 1956 textbook on delinquency that has gone through at least twelve printings. A mass of correlational findings has linked delinquent behavior to various features of family life. Holding parents responsible for their offspring is rooted in tradition, and arguments attributing juvenile misconduct to unsatisfactory home situations have strong logical and intuitive appeal. Certainly, the family has an important role in child development. However, its potential for preventing delinquent behavior frequently has been overstated. Exaggerating the importance of the family has distracted attention from other roots of delinquent behavior, generated questionable prevention programs, contributed to inappropriate early identification of predelinquents, and produced a sense of futility about prevention measures affecting adolescents ("by then, it's already too late").

A preface to some explanations of misconduct is that, "If the family were what it used to be and did what it used to do, there would be less delinquency today." Some investigators have questioned the extent to which families have changed in the past several generations. Historical evidence gathered by Frank Furstenberg cast doubt on the assumption that American families once were mostly happy, cohesive, and able to boast consistent disciplinary practices. Goode has labeled this depiction "the classical family of Western nostalgia" (Furstenberg, 1968, pp 95-105). Nevertheless, there are differences in the family today. Not only is it no longer an extended kinship group, it very frequently does not even fit the widely held image of the nuclear family. The family no longer offers so many opportunities for maturing young persons to demonstrate competence in work-related pursuits; it is less likely to exist in a supportive neighborhood or community environment; and it no longer monopolizes the time of youth to the extent that it once did.

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*Rocky Mountain News, January 12, 1979, p 34C.

As functions formerly performed by the family have fallen to outside organizations, the social circle of young persons has expanded. The older a child is, the truer this becomes. There is evidence that some, but not all, of these changes have a bearing on delinquent behavior. Recognition of the problems associated with social change does not mean that families should become a primary focus of delinquency prevention programs. Now, as in the past, the family can benefit from certain forms of direct help. However, remedies for many problems generated by changes affecting the family lie outside the family. Restoring extended kinship arrangements, putting work-related opportunity back into the home, and giving parents more of a monopoly on their children's time are not feasible objectives. Instead of trying to turn back the clock, prevention practitioners should work for adjustments needed elsewhere in the system to counteract the detrimental effects on youth of uneven change. This kind of effort is discussed further in a subsequent section of the volume. The remainder of the present section assesses explanations of delinquent behavior that locate causes within the home.

By 1950, Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck had completed a study of 1,000 young persons, half of them institutionalized delinquents and half not. Their analysis revealed some 65 personal traits that differentiated delinquents from nondelinquents and about 40 home and family conditions associated with the undesirable traits. The researchers termed these conditions "delinquency-related social factors;" central among them were discipline by the father, supervision by the mother, affection of father and mother, and family cohesiveness. The Gluecks expressed a wish "to stir the imagination of ingenious therapists." Shortly after the findings were published, the New York City Youth Board used the five family conditions identified by the Gluecks as a scale to assess probable future delinquency among 5- and 6-year-old children.* Subsequently, minor variations of the same scale (often in conjunction with socioeconomic indicators) have been used in several early identification programs, reportedly as recently as the present.

Like many investigations of the family and delinquency, the Gluecks' work was almost entirely correlational. Although their study merits praise as a pioneer attempt to locate causes of delinquency outside the

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*The Gluecks presented the findings in the form of a scale for predicting delinquent behavior in Delinquents in the Making, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1952; then elaborated the findings in Family Environment and Delinquency, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962.

psyches of individual youth, it has been criticized widely for inadequacies in exploring the causal ordering of variables, examining the operation of possible intervening variables, and identifying the presence of spurious relationships (Schur, 1973, pp 47-48). Moreover, the nature of the samples used makes the findings suspect. Since those classified as delinquent were youth who had been institutionalized, many results of the study could reflect criteria for judicial decisionmaking, rather than factors associated with delinquent behavior. For example, Sanders and others have suggested that the Gluecks' finding that 60 percent of delinquents and only 34 percent of nondelinquents came from broken homes may demonstrate nothing more than an assumption by the court that juveniles from broken homes are more likely to require institutionalization than those from unbroken homes (Sanders, 1976, p 27).

This interpretation receives support from a study of F. Ivan Nye. Nye found that, although children from broken homes committed only slightly more delinquent acts, their chances of being sent to an institution were more than twice as great as for children from unbroken homes. In addition, Nye found that: (a) Among middle-class youth, but not among lower or upper class youth, favorable adjustment was significantly related to having a nonworking mother;* (b) delinquency was positively related to the number of times a family moved; (c) recreation with parents inside the home, but not outside, was negatively associated with delinquent behavior; and (d) boys' delinquency was negatively related to how neat and stylish they perceived their parents to be outside the home, while girls' delinquency was related to the way they perceived their fathers' appearance in the home (Nye, 1958).

Subsequent research has provided further evidence that children from broken homes are more likely to be retained in the justice system, but that disharmony (or lack of cohesiveness, or social instability) in the home, broken or not, is a more important correlate of delinquent behavior. The evidence concerning the impact of working mothers remains inconclusive; one recent study found an apparent effect on delinquency when mothers worked sporadically, but not when they worked steadily. Inconsistent disciplinary practices have been found to be related to delinquency in unhappy homes, but not in happy ones. Although lack of a male role model in the home has been presented as an important contributor to delinquency, a recent investigation has shown structural

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*Nye speculated that, among lower class families, the added income offsets the negative effects of mother's absence and that upper class working mothers can afford to hire a substitute.

matriarchy to be of little importance for either blacks or whites.* Unsatisfactory father/son interaction has been found to be associated with delinquent behavior.

The correlates between conditions in the family and delinquent behavior are impressive. However, two questions should be addressed before starting a program to correct these conditions. First, to what extent will forces external to the home counteract any benefits from working within the home? Second, will the technique proposed correct the detrimental conditions without leaving other problems behind in their place? With one exception described below, the devices tried so far have not worked well.

2.1.2.3 Individually Targeted Programs Focusing on Background and Environmental Factors

Even without an adequate understanding of the reasons that certain factors are associated with delinquent behavior, statistical relationships alone can offer a basis for prediction. The abundance of correlates presented in this section, often in combination with personality indicators and teacher impressions, has received wide use in early identification of predelinquents or "youth at risk." Where long-term follow-up has provided a check on accuracy, most early identification programs have been found to overpredict delinquency. However, subsequent behavior of the youth involved generally has borne out predictions of trouble more often than would occur by chance. Of all the predictors used, expectations of teachers based on the behavior of individual children in elementary school probably have come true the most consistently.

West and Farrington offer the following review of research in the 1960s pertaining to predictions by teachers:

> "Reckless and Dinitz (1967) asked teachers in Ohio to nominate, from among 12-year-old white boys, one group who would never get into trouble with the law and another who would almost certainly be the subject of police or court action in the future. During the next four years, about

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*The importance of an adequate male role model was stressed in Winton M. Ahlstrom and Robert J. Havighurst, 400 Losers, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971, pp 221-222. The more recent findings is reported in City Life and Delinquency--Victimization, Fear of Crime and Gang Membership, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, 1977, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, Vol. 9 (4):439-440.

4 percent of the first group and 40 percent of the second had contact with the courts. Hathaway and Monachesi (1963) asked teachers in Minnesota to say whether or not each of some 5,000 14-year-old boys were likely to get into trouble, and followed up the boys' court records for three years. After eliminating those who were already delinquents before being assessed by their teachers, they found that the ratings very significantly predicted future delinquency. Kvaraceus (1960), in a followup study in Massachusetts, also showed that teachers' opinions identified future delinquents. Finally, Conger and Miller (1966), Khleif (1964) and others have retrospectively investigated cumulative school records, and have discovered that, from an early age, delinquents were rated worse in behavior than non-delinquents. Conger and Miller reported that, at age 8, the future delinquents were said to be poorly adapted, to have less regard for the rights and feelings of peers, to have poorer attitudes towards authority, to be more easily distracted and to be more aggressive." (West and Farrington, 1973, p 99).

In their own research, the same investigators reported even more striking predictive accuracy of ratings by teachers in London than of ratings by their U.S. counterparts. Of the 92 children rated "most troublesome" by London teachers, 44.6 percent eventually became officially delinquent, compared with only 3.5 percent of the 143 children rated "least troublesome." The conclusion of a more recent literature review by the California Youth Authority is that teacher ratings, particularly when based on observations between the ages of 10 and 13, are promising predictors of delinquency.*

The extent to which this evidence attests to teachers' uncanny ability to spot early signs of delinquency is debatable. In the absence of research designed expressly to settle the debate, an alternative explanation is that children, like the rest of us, tend to meet the expectations of others. Even subtle clues from teachers that they expect trouble can affect a young recipient's self-concept and behavior. Although not automatic (in light of the frequent overprediction mentioned above), the impact can be especially pronounced on a young

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*California Youth Authority, A Review of the Literature on the Early Identification of Delinquent-Prone Children, Sacramento: 1978, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, Vol 10(2), p 173.

person with few important others in his or her life. As evidence that teacher ratings really are accurate, several researchers have demonstrated that the same youngsters tend to receive bad ratings from a succession of teachers over time, and some have shown that peer and self-ratings correspond significantly with teacher ratings. Gibbons points out that these findings can be taken instead as evidence that early predictions by teachers may have continuing negative consequences.

> "There is more than a slight possibility that once a boy gets pointed out as a 'bad one' in school records, subsequent reactions of teachers become heavily colored by this initial judgment. Then, too, the offender's own self-attitudes and views of others may be influenced by his perception of their opinion of him" (Gibbons, 1970, p 83).

No matter what the criteria used, singling out children thought to be potentially delinquent carries the risk of inappropriate labeling. Whether based on background factors, personality tests, or teacher ratings, predictions can come true for some children simply because they are made and acted upon. This applies as well to less formal predictions. Although the researchers suggested another way to account for it, one of West and Farrington's findings appears to illustrate the operation of a self-fulfilling prophecy:

> "The (London) boys born illegitimate were singularly delinquent-prone, which is understandable if illegitimacy tends to reflect poor parental standards" (West and Farrington, 1973, p 197).

Deciding whether the risks associated with early identification are worth taking should not be difficult. On the minus side is the chance that the prediction will turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy and thus contribute to delinquent behavior. On the plus side are the prospects of reducing delinquency through treatment of those identified. The failure of treatment programs described in the preceding section makes such prospects appear virtually nonexistent.

Despite their lack of benefit to young persons, some forms of early identification are beneficial to schools in at least two ways. Segregating more difficult pupils from the rest can produce a smoother operation from a bureaucratic standpoint, and claiming that certain pupils belong to categories requiring special attention can bring added income to the school. Federal funding guidelines currently make "learning disabled" the best-paying category, but supplemental funds also are available for a variety of special programs. The greater the number of young persons who are labeled so as to qualify for special treatment, the greater the income for the school. Evidence that labeling may sometimes be a matter of convenience comes from a study of 7,417 school children using special school

resources between 1965 and 1970.

> "Of all children using school resources designed for the mentally retarded, only 24 percent actually had IQ scores of 69 or below, the standard cutoff point below which children are judged to be mentally retarded.
>
> "Of children using resources for the hearing handicapped, only 5 percent were identified in an audiometric test as having hearing losses.
>
> "Half of the children using special resources for the visually impaired had normal vision when tested."*

With respect to the more judgmental criteria described in this section, one can surmise that there is room for even greater inaccuracy.

Another kind of prediction sometimes attempted is that of subsequent dangerous behavior by juveniles already in contact with a court. Stephen Schlesinger recently evaluated some 30 factors commonly used to predict dangerousness. These included unfavorable home conditions, poor personality prognosis, overstrict or lax discipline by either parent, school retardation, and school misconduct. Schlesinger found that none of the factors had a statistically significant relationship with subsequent dangerous behavior of youth in his sample (Schlesinger, 1978).

The presumed importance of family conditions in contributing to delinquency has implied to some that prevention measures must occur quite early in life in order to have an effect. An extreme statement of the position that "it's all over at an early age" is currently on the book rack of several thousand supermarkets. It is Burton White's The First Three Years of Life. As an early evaluator of Head Start, White felt that one problem with that program was that it reached children too late. In the book and in numerous television appearances and magazine articles, White has offered a rationale for early parent training and implied that programs to benefit teenagers are mostly futile. White summarizes his position as follows:

> "To some extent I really believe it is too late after age three. But the qualifications I place on this statement are

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*Study conducted by the SRI Educational Policy Research Center, Menlo Park, California, reported in Psychology Today, October 1978, pp 31-32.

important. Children continue to develop after age three. . .

> "I do believe, however, after studying human development for 20 years, that the degree of flexibility that humans have, their capacity for fundamental change in their life style, in their intellectual capacity, and so forth, declines steadily with age . . . What the argument boils down to is the degree of flexibility that remains at various stages of life . . .
>
> "Nowhere in child development research have we demonstrated a strong capacity to alter early personality patterns, or early social attitudes. Nevertheless, in spite of the lack of demonstrated ability to make fundamental personality changes after the early years, I strongly advocate that we all keep trying . . . What it all boils down to is that there is capacity for change, including dramatic improvement, after the child is three years of age. However, it is often very difficult to bring about desired changes, and more often than not, remediation will not be achieved." (White, 1975, p 257).

Without denying that some early childhood experiences are likely to have consequences that persist through adolescence and beyond, at least five considerations (apart from the risk of labeling) argue strongly against making toddlers and their parents prime targets of delinquency prevention programs. First, both research and everyday observation indicate that important changes after age 3 (or 6 or 12 or 20) are not the longshots that some have depicted. Second, the link between variations in "fundamental personality" or specifiable "ingrained traits" and delinquent behavior has not been established. Third, the evidence that particular parenting practices produce particular traits or behavior is meager. Fourth, harmful parenting practices probably result far less frequently from ignorance than from social forces external to the home that act upon the family. Fifth, many probable causes of delinquency do not come into play until later in the child's life experience.

Data reported in a textbook written by White in 1971 indicate that his empirical findings with respect to desirable outcomes are somewhat narrower than implied in the more popular book. The outcome measures reported pertain almost entirely to the development of sensorimotor and other faculties regarded as related to intelligence. While deficiencies in these areas constitute one of many possible sources of trouble in school, there is little evidence linking them directly to delinquency. One study found an association between clumsiness and getting caught, but not committing delinquent acts. The link between certain child-rearing practices and favorable social adjustment remains largely impressionistic.

Even if one assumes that good parenting skills will reduce the delinquent behavior of offspring, only a small portion of possible content for

parent training programs can boast anything approaching consensus among experts. In contrast to optimistic claims about suitable instructional content presented in The First Three Years of Life, White concludes his textbook as follows:

> ". . . I do not believe we have the raw material out of which to construct a developmental theory of consequence at this time. I think we had better invest most of our resources in sharpening our observational tools and collecting twenty years of natural history first" (White, 1971, p 136).

This does not deny that there is a core of generally accepted knowledge that parents are better off having than not having -- ways of providing youngsters with low-risk opportunities to explore, time-management skills, pointers on physical health, etc. However, the extent to which conveying knowledge of this sort to parents constitutes delinquency prevention is highly questionable. Moreover, typical programs to deliver parent training are subject to some of the same difficulties that frequently undermine family therapy efforts. These difficulties are described shortly.

Family therapy is another approach to prevention resting on the view that roots of delinquent behavior are in the home. A recent evaluation of a Southern California diversion program reported a highly significant positive association among male clients (N=155) between hours of family counseling received and the likelihood of being arrested during the 6 months following treatment; more hours of treatment were associated with more boys arrested on 6-month followup. Among girls, there was no association between family counseling and subsequent arrests (Palmer et al., 1978).

Romig reviewed evaluations of 12 family treatment programs conducted between 1962 and 1975 and involving some 2,000 youth. All used randomly assigned or matched control groups. Four of the programs produced an apparent decrease in delinquent behavior in the treatment groups, five showed no effect, and three produced an apparent *increase* in delinquent behavior among the treatment groups. Rombig concluded that the programs he reviewed contained both effective and ineffective elements and predicted that "family counseling will be effective when it focuses upon teaching parents communication, problem-solving, and disciplining skills" (Romig, 1978, pp 87-95).

In line with Romig's prediction, evaluators of one type of family treatment have reported initial success in reducing aggressive behavior of children. Begun in the late 1960s at the Oregon Research Institute, the approach is to teach parents social learning techniques to apply in disciplining their own children. The teaching takes place through interviews or evening training sessions (approximately once a week), textbook study, telephone problemsolving contacts, and feedback from observers who spend 6 to 10 hours in the home. Parents are taught to decrease their

use of punishment (other than "time-out"), decrease their positive reinforcement of aggressive behavior, and increase their positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior. Data collected on 27 families in the Oregon program and on 39 families in a similar program in Montana show reductions in problem behavior of children aged 5 through 13 over a 12-month period. Noting a high attrition rate among poverty level families, the Montana evaluator has suggested that the main utility of the program is for middle-class parents (Reid, 1975; Wahler, 1978). This approach illustrates an apparent solution to the problem of finding content effective in direct treatment of families. At substantial cost (in this case, about $1,000 per family), the approach offers probable benefit to small numbers of families.

Selection of targeted families poses a potentially more severe problem for family treatment and parent training programs alike. Indiscretion here may account for instances where programs were not only ineffective but counterproductive. The means used to select parents to receive training or families to receive counseling can have boomerang effects. The wish to reach those who need help most frequently leads to targeting on youth identified by the school or justice system as "in trouble."

Even when their participation in a program intended to improve the home situation is voluntary, parents are unlikely to lose sight of the reason they were singled out to receive the service. Under these conditions, every contact with a trainer or counselor can serve as a reminder to parents that others have spotted a defect in their child. Increased negative labeling by parents of their children is a possible consequence of this process. With respect to parent training programs, there are ways to avoid this risk and at the same time enlarge the number of potential beneficiaries. White suggests building training in parenting skills into mainstream high school curricula or into pediatric health service delivery. In 1979, a series designed to convey skills to parents of young children began on public television.

When youth have reached an age that puts them on the threshold of adulthood, Victor Streib has raised an additional objection to involving the family in treatment. Such treatment may reinforce a child-like role that no longer serves any purpose in the young person's life.

> "Clearly, what these persons need are adult coping skills. To retrain them as children is to blindly vitalize the legal presumption that persons under eighteen years or twenty-one years of age are children. Regardless of their legal classification, most of these people are not living child roles and will not be in the future" (Streib, 1978, p 53).

Even if problems of selection and affordable delivery of suitable content are resolved, it is highly probable that the best of service packages targeted directly at families will have only short-lived impact. Problems within a family are due in large measure to pressures originating outside the home. Hirschi found a relationship between poor school performance and lack of close communication with parents; he attributed this to lessened willingness to share news of failure, as compared with news of success. The traditional and persisting value placed on home ownership, coupled with spiraling real estate costs, are external forces that have made dual income a necessity for many. Thirty years ago, possibly a less stressful time than today, Reuben Hill wrote the following:

> "The modern family lives in a great state of tension precisely because it is the great burden carrier of the social order. In a society of rapid social change, problems outnumber solutions, and the resulting uncertainties are absorbed by the members of society, who are for the most part also members of families. Because the family is the bottleneck through which all troubles pass, no other association so reflects the strains and stresses of life. With few exceptions persons in work-a-day America return to rehearse their daily frustrations within the family, and hope to get the necessary understanding and resilience to return the morrow to the fray."*

Hill subsequently developed a schema portraying multiple external causes of family inadequacy in averting potential crises. The message is that a so-called family crisis (Figure 2-2) is likely to have its roots in forces outside the family.

Echoing the call to focus attention outside the home, Arlene Skolnick wrote in 1978 that

> "the strains of parenthood are not the inevitable battle of wills and the temperamental incompatibilities of adults and children. In part, they are the responsiblity of social arrangements that make parents solely responsible for children and fail to provide even minimal assistance for parents as they go about their daily rounds of work and chores." (Skolnick, 1978, p 295).

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*Reuben Hill, Families Under Stress, N.Y.: Harper and Brothers, 1949, cited in Reuben Hill, "Social Stresses on the Family," in Marvin B. Sussman, 1968, (pp 440-451), p 441.

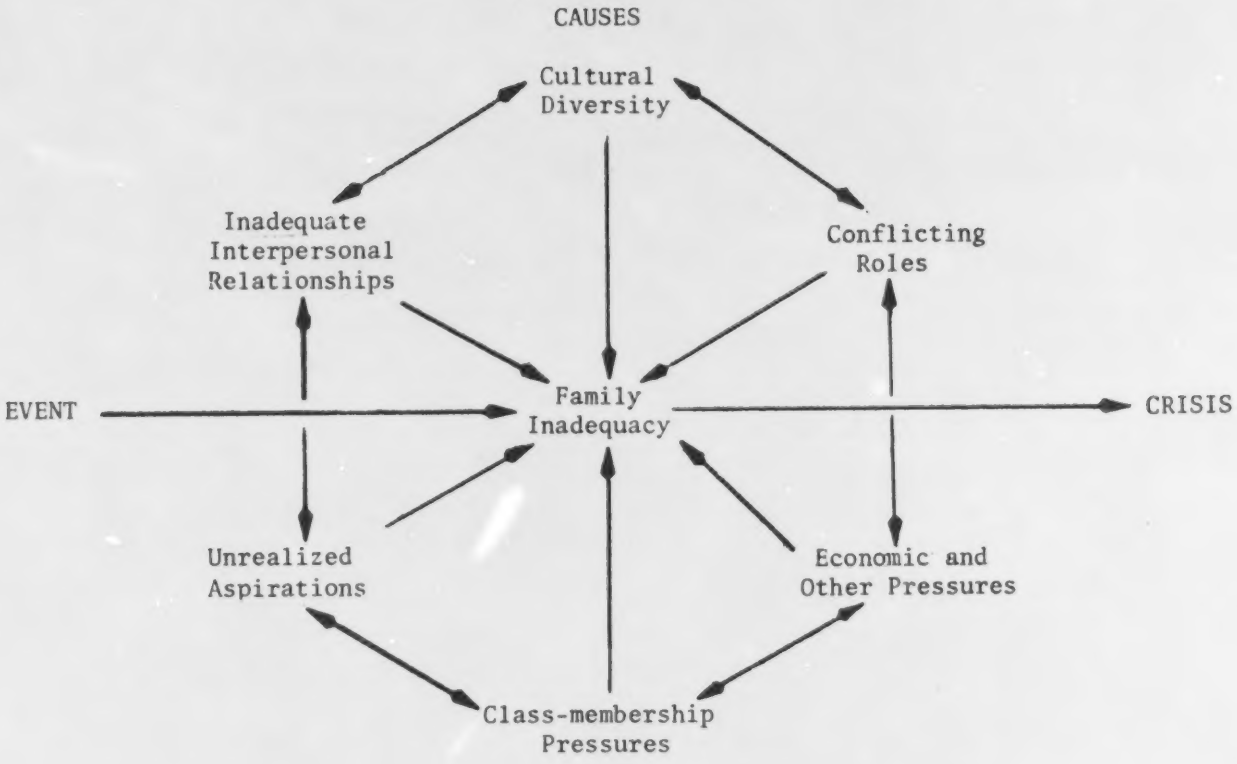

Figure 2-2. Interplay of Forces Producing a Family Crisis
Reuben Hill in Marvin Sussman, 1968, p 446

Sknolnick noted that external sources of strain have escalated at the same time as the period of economic uselessness of youth has increased. She speculates that the first trend has made it more difficult for parents to give affection, while

> "the prolonged economic uselessness of modern children may deprive them of a major source of self-validation and make them more dependent on the parental affection and the opinions of other people." (1978, p 328).

Skolnick proposed that

> "rather than trying to reform the family itself, the best strategy for improving family life would be to reduce the stresses and strains that flow from the larger society to the family." (1978, p 383).

Although the role of external conditions in creating family problems has been recognized for several decades, the predominant target of programs intended to alleviate the problems has remained the family itself. Instead of taking steps to curb the growth of stressful conditions or offset their effects, most programs to help families reflect an assumption that the ability of parents to cope is limitless, so long as they are fed an ever-increasing array of skills. At their best, such programs may temporarily stop the bleeding for small numbers of families, but they seldom address the roots of the problem Skolnick points to the absence of even basic reforms, despite repeated recommendations from White House conferences on children and youth spanning a 60-year period.

> "For example, the United States is the only industrialized country without a family health-care program that includes prenatal, maternal, and child-care services. This lack may partially explain why our infant mortality is higher than that of many other countries. Other social indicators suggesting that all is not well with American families are: the large number of families and children living in poverty, the unavailability of child-care options, and the high prevalence of child abuse." (Skolnick, 1978, p 383).

To summarize this section, there are conditions in the home that indirectly contribute to delinquent behavior. However, the number of conditions that do contribute appears to be smaller than is generally believed. Their impact on delinquency does not occur mostly during infancy and early childhood; their connection with delinquent behavior usually is mediated by policies and practices in the larger social system. Many of the undesirable conditions have their roots outside the home, and early identification does more harm than good. Programs targeted directly on families

are expensive and fraught with difficulties, but the main recommendation here is not for more money, better techniques, and solutions to the programming difficulties. The recommendation is for shifting the target to those aspects of the larger system that make deleterious home conditions prevalent and to the organizational policies and practices that create a link between certain features of the family and delinquency.

2.1.3 Explanations Applying Sociological Theory to Individuals

Although most contemporary theories of delinquent behavior find roots of delinquency in the larger social setting, all of them can be construed to justify programs directed at individual youth. Sociologists acknowledge that the relationship between individuals and society is a two-way street, with each able to affect the other. Nevertheless, some are accused of exaggerating the relative strength of social forces. On the other hand, practitioners sometimes err in the opposite direction, by acting as if no social obstacle is too great for a properly equipped young person to overcome.

Program designers may accept theoretical propositions about causes of delinquency but translate them into prevention practices in ways the theorists never intended. Instead of finding means to correct a delinquency-producing social process, a practitioner may take the process as irrevocable and try to give individual youngsters the equipment they need to counteract it. The requisite equipment usually includes social, academic, vocational, coping, or manipulative skills.

Although programs that target on individuals to offset flaws in their social environment miss the roots of the problem and typically are quite costly, some have merit as temporary stopgap measures for limited numbers of youth. Others appear to be exercises in futility. This section presents capsule summaries of four bodies of contemporary social theory and describes ways of applying the implications of each to programs directed at individual youth. More detailed descriptions of each theory, along with evaluative comments, appear later in this volume.

2.1.3.1 Labeling and Societal Reaction Theories

Narrowly stated, the perspective of labeling theory is that, once a person is officially designated a "delinquent," a "criminal," or a "convict," the label itself becomes a force contributing to further misconduct. This occurs because the label creates a tendency for others to place expectations on the person that fit the designation and for the person labeled to alter his or her self-concept to include traits stereotypically associated with the label. In this narrow sense, the explanation focuses on causes of recurring deviance, rather than of initial delinquent acts.

Recalling the section above on early identification, the same process can come into play before a young person engages in any delinquent behavior. The labels "predelinquent," "slow learner," "emotionally disturbed child," and "potential troublemaker" (to name a few) all carry expectations for deviant acts. Even when communication of these expectations to a young person is subtle, the labels and their euphemistic synonyms are likely contributors to undesirable behavior. This perspective adds to our understanding of delinquent behavior by pointing to causes residing in social interaction and in organizational practices. The implication for prevention is to correct the mechanisms that generate inappropriate negative labels and produce expectations for misconduct and to expand the avenues for achieving positive labels. (The final section of this chapter includes evidence bearing on labeling theory.)

Although the propositions contained in labeling theory are about external social processes, they have found a place in treatment directed at young persons' mental processes. Counselors and therapists have in their arsenals techniques for persuading clients that they are persons of worth, "no matter what anyone else tells you." The remedy for the negative effects of labeling lies in learning to ignore selectively the opinions of others. Two California psychologists have argued that this approach works even for insulating the self-images of persons who have penetrated the justice system.

> "In a two-year followup on parolees, 36 percent of those inmates who had received psychotherapy in prison encountered no problem with the law, and an additional 22 percent encountered only a minor problem with the law. If the courts' label, "felon," was irreparably damning then we would expect all so labeled to inevitably return to prison. Certainly, labeling a person a "felon" does stigmatize him, but the stigma can be overcome." (Shawver and Sanders, 1977, p 433).

Even assuming that effective therapeutic techniques exist, trying to overcome the consequences of labeling by treating the persons labeled is a never-ending chore. It is a rare client who can sustain for long gains made in the treatment setting, so long as the environment that created the problem remains untouched. Moreover, this kind of individual treatment can forestall reform of entrenched organizational practices that routinely apply negative labels to a portion of every new population that the organization serves.

2.1.3.2 Subcultural and Differential Association Theories

One does not have to accept the existence of a "delinquent subculture"*

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*Evidence concerning the existence of a delinquent subculture is presented later in this volume.

to acknowledge that there are differences in beliefs and manners among various segments of the population. These differences create a risk that conduct norms that are appropriate in one setting will govern behavior in a setting where they are seen as inappropriate. They also make it possible for anyone to be subject to contradictory influences, for good or ill, depending upon those groups with which he or she associates. Some groups are more likely than others to define as appropriate behavior acts that are generally regarded as delinquent. Such groups may not only bestow approval on violations of the law, but may transmit techniques for committing them. According to the author of differential association theory,* persons become delinquent when socially learned definitions favorable to infraction of the law come to outweigh definitions unfavorable to infraction. The relative amounts of time spent in various groups, frequency of contact, intensity of interaction and age at which the groups are encountered determine which group's teachings will win out. Subcultural theory and differential association theory focus respectively on the larger social system and on social interaction. The first finds roots of delinquency in normative differences among population segments, while the second identifies causes in learning that takes place in certain groups. Two implications for prevention are to eliminate institutionalized negative reactions to purely superficial subcultural differences and to change practices in schools that inadvertantly breed peer groups where delinquent behavior is reinforced.

Less promising are translations of the propositions embodied in these theories into individual treatment. Equipping young persons who need it with a veneer of "middle-class polish" may help them avoid negative reactions from influential adults encountered at school and in the world of work, so long as being selected to receive this treatment does not carry stigma. Preaching "definitions unfavorable to violation of the law" to counteract definitions learned in peer groups probably is futile, as is admonishing young persons about the company they keep. A youth's choice of friends is governed by more than chance. If conditions that created a pattern of associations are left unchanged, the associations are likely to persist, no matter how many times a person is told to find a better class of friends. (Forcibly putting a youth "out of circulation" is another imprudent remedy, requiring the untenable assumption that institutionalized companions will be an improvement over street companions.) As long as the associations persist, individual treatment is an inappropriate remedy. Donald Cressey has suggested that the reasoning behind such treatment is "that criminality is analogous to an infectious disease, like

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*William H. Sutherland. A complete statement of the theory, as updated by Donald Cressey, appears in Sutherland and Cressey, 1970.

syphilis -- while group contacts of various kinds are necessary to the disorder, the disorder can be treated in a clinic, without reference to the persons from whom it was acquired (Cressey, 1966, p 468).

2.1.3.3 Strain and Opportunity Theories

The focus here is on two inharmonious features of American social structure. On the one hand, there is a strong emphasis on success goals for all; on the other, legitimate avenues for achieving success are open only to some. This disharmony between ends and means is a source of frustration for the part of the population whose opportunities are blocked. In a society where people are judged more by what they have than how they obtained it, a realistic way to avoid frustration is to seek material success through illegitimate activities, letting the end justify the means. Strain and opportunity theories find causes of delinquency built into the social system. Their main implication for prevention is to remove institutionalized barriers to opportunity, in order to equalize educational and occupational access.

Besides providing a basis for structural remedies for delinquency, the logic of strain and opportunity theories frequently has been translated into individual treatment. To solve problems created by a misalignment between a young person's aspirations and his or her prospects for realizing them, some school counselors have advised their clients to scale down their aspirations. This approach is no longer fashionable. A more respectable individual solution is special training designed to enlarge an individual's opportunities by inculcating vocational and job-finding skills, academic abilities, and pointers on legitimate ways to "work the system." Given appropriate content and nonstigmatizing recruitment, such programs can benefit limited numbers of youth. Because this approach represents a stopgap remedy for ills of the larger social system, one-shot help for a few dozen or a few hundred young persons can at best have temporary and narrow impact. At a minimum, the individual treatment approach should be augmented by work in the community on the factors that made the program necessary, so it will not have to be repeated ad infinitum.

2.1.3.4 Bonding, Control, and Drift Theories

These explanations describe structured social mechanisms that keep most people from committing delinquent or criminal acts most of the time. Economic, education, familial, and religious sectors of society function as vehicles through which bonds to the conventional moral order are maintained. When the system is running smoothly, features of the workplace, school, home, and church operate to keep most people caring enough about maintaining their affiliations with at least some of these bodies that they stay out of trouble. By providing a stake in conformity, transmitting law-abiding norms, and involving persons in conventional pursuits, these organizations and groups reduce the probability of delinquent behavior.

Most youth (of all social classes) have no ties with the workplace. When policies, practices, and interaction in school, home, and church make ties with these seem not worth having or leave young persons with no "good standing" to protect, there is little incentive to obey conventional rules. A probable consequence of having nothing important to lose is delinquent behavior. Weakening of conventional affiliations also may make some persons more susceptible to peer group influences. Even if these groups do not teach delinquent norms, the interaction that occurs may create shared misconceptions that temporarily extend the permissible area of personal irresponsibility. Members may exaggerate cues from one another that delinquent behavior on certain occasions is not only tolerated but expected.

No matter how strongly the traditional bastions of social order espouse conventional morality, the message will be wasted on those who have no inducement to listen. The implication for prevention is to modify the features of these settings that regularly destroy that inducement for large numbers of youth.

Once again, a cause of delinquency has been traced to a flaw in the social system and, once again, some practitioners have attempted to cure the problem by treating individual youngsters. By doing so, they have burdened themselves with a few thankless tasks. These include trying to persuade a disillusioned young client that school is really a neat place to be, that the approval of teachers is a valuable thing to obtain and keep, that parents are worthy of respect, and that the joys of home are there for any who will seek them out. Lecturing young persons on the merits of an affiliation that has turned sour or admonishing them to start caring more about the opinions of parents or teachers is not likely to have any lasting impact. On another lever, a recommendation contained in Preventing Delinquency is for reality counseling to counteract the shared misperceptions generated in peer groups (NIJJDP, 1977, p 79).

Perhaps the most popular element of bonding theory to apply in programs targeted on individuals is that of "involvement in conventional pursuits." Some have taken this as synonymous with the folk notion that "the Devil finds work for idle hands" and have seen prevention possibilities in recreation projects, busy-work, and employment programs. There is substantial evidence that simply consuming a young person's time will not reduce delinquent behavior. As Hirschi has pointed out, being delinquent is not a full-time job. He found no association between time spent in sports, hobbies or work around the house and delinquent behavior (Hirschi, 1969, pp 189-191). Joseph Rankin reported similar findings in a 1976 study of Michigan youth.* Following their review of juvenile

*Joseph H. Rankin, "Investigating the Interrelations Among Social Control Variables and Conformity," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 67(4): 470-480, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, 9(3):331-332.

delinquency programs, Dixon and Wright concluded that

> "Recreational programs have likewise not demonstrated any effects on official delinquency rates. Such programs are often cited as positive examples of delinquency control, indicating the large number of youths enrolled, the number of events participated in and so forth. The physical well-being of youth represents a valid reason for funding recreational programs. However, there is no evidence that these programs in any way alter delinquency." (Dixon and Wright, 1975, p 37).

Youth work programs have not fared much better. Prefacing their report on a Kansas City program, Ahlstrom and Havighurst reviewed evidence of work programs in the 1960's and conclude that all of them were total or partial failures. They estimate that about one-fourth of youth who received employment-related help in the program they evaluated benefited from it (Ahlstrom and Havighurst, 1971). In his review of twelve vocational and work program evaluations conducted between 1966 and 1974, Romig found only three that showed any favorable effect on delinquency (Romig, 1978, pp 43-56).

More promising among programs directed at individuals are those that can provide a client with something highly desirable that would be lost through subsequent misconduct. This is the feature that distinguished the three effective vocational and work programs reviewed by Romig from the nine that were unsuccessful.

> "The key factor that overlapped in all the successful programs was that the youths were provided job opportunities where either advancement was possible or they were given supportive educational skills and diplomas that made advancement likely." (Romig, 1978, p 51).

Within the limitations that characterize all programs that attempt to compensate for deleterious social conditions by treating individuals, helping a young person develop a stake that is worth protecting has promise. The question to ask in assessing the prevention prospects of a proposed vocational or education program is *whether the program is capable of delivering such a stake.*

2.2 Delinquent Behavior and Social Interaction

Although the foregoing sections have included references to ways in which interaction can contribute to delinquent behavior, the programs described so far (with the exception of some of those directed at the family) have had individuals as their primary targets. A limitation common to even the best of these is that they miss the roots of the problem.

Programs that focus directly on interaction are the topic of this section. Frequently, these also are off-target, but not by so far as those that treat individuals. Differential association theory addresses interaction specifically; the brief sketch of it presented earlier is elaborated in this section. Material bearing on interaction is drawn from the other three bodies of theory as well.

2.2.1 Explanations Focusing on Peer Group Interaction

Edwin H. Sutherland's aim was to construct a theory that would explain every instance of criminal activity. A product of his efforts was differential association theory. It depicts delinquency and crime as behavior learned in social interaction, principally within intimate personal groups. The learning of criminal behavior includes both techniques and attitudes. Groups transmit definitions of legal codes that vary from favorable to unfavorable, and a person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favoring violation of the law.

The associations a person has vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity; these four factors in combination determine how great the impact of any given association will be on an individual (Sutherland and Cressey, 1970). The professor who first presented these propositions to one of the authors of this volume pounded the podium with both fists to emphasize each point and amplified every one of them with the phrases, *"And there are no exceptions!"* He got away with it, mostly because of the generality of the theory. Critics subsequently have identified a few apparent exceptions, but their favorite line of attack is the generality itself. Although the propositions have received credit for directing attention to the role of social learning in criminal behavior, they also have received criticism for being virtually irrefutable. Moreover, the level of analysis that the theory addresses has little utility in predicting delinquency.

Two questions left unanswered are:

- Why do some young persons and not others wind up having frequent, lasting, and intense interaction in prodelinquent groups?

- What makes the difference between times when young persons engage in delinquent behavior and times when the same persons obey conventional norms?

Answers to the first question come from labeling, strain, and bonding theories. Schools may inadvertently *create* prodelinquent groups by practices that not only negatively label a portion of students but put those who are similarly labeled together in special classes for "slow learners" or "probable troublemakers." From strain theory comes conjecture that young persons who are similarly blocked in legitimate opportunity

may flock together not only for company in their misery but because a gang may be the only source of illegitimate opportunity (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960, pp 145-148). And bonding theorists contend that membership in gangs and heightened susceptibility to their influence are consequences of a breakdown in conventional affiliations.

Hirschi and Matza each offer an answer to the second question, that of explaining intermittent involvement in delinquent behavior. Hirschi points out that, compared with the concepts of "superego" and "internalized norms," attachments can be regarded as quite fluid. The value a young person places on his or her affiliations with school and home can fluctuate over relatively short periods of time (Hirschi, 1969, pp 16-19).

A second explanation of intermittent involvement comes from Matza. Offering an alternative to differential association theory, he proposes that peer group interaction occasionally creates temporary permission to engage in delinquency. Matza presents evidence that delinquents hold disapproving attitudes of delinquent behavior.* When delinquent behavior occurs, it is not because persons have changed their basic attitudes by internalizing "definitions favorable to violation of the law." Instead of instilling new attitudes, peer group interaction more frequently merely creates a situational and fleeting climate where delinquent behavior becomes acceptable. Most conventional conduct norms are conditional. Typically, there are approved exceptions to the rules; behavior that normally is disapproved becomes tolerable when certain ameliorating conditions are present. Moreover, individuals are held less accountable for their acts under some circumstances than others.

Peer group interaction on occasion expands the range of exceptions to the rules, exaggerates the ameliorating conditions, and enlarges the area of individual irresponsibility. This provides group members with episodic release from convention. Group interaction can broaden legally acceptable "excuses" by defining self-defense to include taking the offensive or by defining accident to include recklessness. The interaction can justify certain acts on the basis of social injustice in the larger system or a belief that the victim either will not suffer or deserves to suffer. Findings from a recent study in Seattle indicate that the interaction also can reduce the perceived certainty of punishment (Alcorn, 1978). Matza terms these periodic rationalizations "techniques of neutralization." Sometimes the permissive climate reflects members' misperceptions of cues from one another, wherein each comes to believe erroneously that all the others approve of certain delinquent acts (Matza, 1964).

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*Based on interviews with the first 100 boys between ages twelve and eighteen who entered a selected training school after a given date (Matza, 1964, pp 48-50, p 66).

Matza contends that a permissive climate alone does not lead inevitably to delinquent behavior. Techniques of neutralization merely set the stage for delinquency, which may or may not materialize. An additional necessary ingredient is a driving force to put individuals in a state of readiness. One such force is a sense of powerlessness or mood of fatalism. For young persons who feel that their own actions have little or no bearing on what happens to them, committing a delinquent act is an uncommonly effective way to make something happen. Athletic, scholastic, or sexual feats also are possible antidotes for a sense of powerlessness, but they carry the risk of failure. In contrast, delinquency always works. Even if the young offender gets caught, he or she still has demonstrated the ability to have an effect, thereby restoring a sense of "causal efficacy of self." The implication is that neither involvement in a delinquent peer group nor a sense of powerlessness by itself will result in delinquent behavior, but that the two combined carry a strong probability of delinquency (Matza, 1964, pp 180-190).

Drawing on theoretical work by Erving Goffman, William Sanders has proposed as another driving force the need for action that will back up identity claims to peers. While adults can turn to hazardous occupations or gambling to demonstrate they truly possess courage, "coolness," or "smartness," youth have relatively few legitimate avenues for establishing the genuineness of their verbal performances. Faddish forms of taking risks within the law and opportunities to engage in civil disobedience for a cause come and go. In contrast, stealing, joy-riding, and violence present timeless ways for youth with little status at home or school to create action to prove to others that they possess valued character traits (Sanders, 1976, pp 55-61).

Research findings provide additional insights into the connection between peer groups and delinquency. First, although the relationship between delinquent behavior and having delinquent friends has been replicated repeatedly, researchers who have investigated causal direction have concluded that associating with other delinquents is partly a product of prior delinquency (Elliott and Voss, 1974, pp 159-167; Hirschi, 1969, pp 145-152). Second, Elliott and Voss reported that commitment to delinquent peers is a far better predictor of subsequent delinquency than is amount of contact. Similarly, Hirschi concluded from his study that, when gangs recruit members who still have strong conventional attachments, they rarely are successful in getting them to commit delinquent acts (Hirschi, 1969, pp 159-161).

Having already engaged in delinquent behavior, a young person is more likely to associate with delinquent peers and, in some localities, to join a delinquent gang. Having weakened conventional attachments, the person is likely to become more committed to peers. The associations and heightened commitment, in turn, increase the probability of further delinquency. The relationship between delinquent behavior and involvement with

delinquent peers appears to be reciprocal. The pattern that emerges is one of alienation from school and home; followed in either order by misconduct and increased interaction with and commitment to delinquent peers; followed by more delinquent behavior. This accords with evidence presented by Hirshci that

> "the low-stake boy (one having lessened conventional attachments) with no delinquent friends is more likely to have committed delinquent acts than the high-stake boy with no delinquent friends, but the low-stake boy is much more likely than the high-stake boy to have committed delinquent acts when they both have several delinquent friends." (Hirschi, 1969, p 518).

2.2.2 Explanations Focusing on Home and Classroom Interaction

Official rates have shown that youngsters whose parents or siblings have criminal backgrounds themselves have disproportionate trouble with the law. This has led to speculation that interaction in some homes may breed delinquency, with close family ties serving to bond children to criminal, rather than conventional, morality. Studies of self-reported delinquency have not confirmed the implication of the official rates. Elliott and Voss found exposure to persons in the family who are known officially as criminals or delinquent to be unrelated to the delinquency of subjects (Elliott and Voss, 1974, p 163). Hirschi found that close ties to criminal or nonconventional parents, like those to conventional parents, were negatively related to delinquent behavior (Hirschi, 1969, p 94-97). Although direct transmission of delinquent norms appears highly improbable, both labeling and bonding theories give cause on other grounds for believing that certain forms of interaction in the home *and in the classroom* can contribute to delinquent behavior.

From the standpoint of labeling theory, communication by parents or teachers of expectations for trouble or poor performance can influence the self-images and behavior of young persons in the direction of the expectations. The study entitled Pygmalion in the Classroon (1968) by Rosenthal and Jacobson provided early evidence of the effects of teacher expectations. At the start of a semester, fictitious assessments of their pupils' ability, with high and low scores assigned strictly by chance to names on class rosters, were handed to sixth- and seventh-grade teachers. With these lists in hand, the teachers thought they know which students were bright and which were normal or dull. This wrong information affected the feedback that teachers gave students in the classroom. Some students apparently sensed that the teacher expected a lot from them and acted accordingly; for others, expectations were low. Repeatedly, students labeled by chance as bright tended to gain in IQ scores, as measured by pre- and post-semester tests. Those not labeled as bright did not show similar gains (Rosenthal and Joacobson, 1968).

Other investigators subsequently have identified both subtle and blatant ways in which teachers communicate their expectations. One is the length of time teachers are willing to wait for an answer after calling on a student. Good and Brophy found that teachers displayed a pattern of quickly passing over students for whom their expectations were low (Good and Brophy, cited in Rosenbaum, 1976, p 177). Rosenbaum gathered evidence that young persons were acutely aware of these, as well as more overt, derogatory communications by teachers. He reported that more than a third of the noncollege track students in his sample mentioned insults directed at them by teachers and administrators and cited several examples.

> "Teachers are always telling us how dumb we are.' 'That teacher doesn't even wait for the slow kids to answer. She calls on somebody else or answers the question herself. What's the sense of studying if the teacher doesn't wait?' One articulate general-track student reported that he sought academic help from a teacher but was told that he was not smart enough to learn that material. Several students reported that a lower-track student who asks a guidance counselor for a change of classes is not only prevented from changing but is also insulted for being so presumptious as to make the request." (Rosenbaum, 1976, pp 179-180).

Rosenbaum went on to relay a comment a teacher made to him in a normal speaking voice in front of a classroom full of students.

> "You're wasting your time asking these kids for their opinions. There's not an idea in any of their heads." (Rosenbaum, 1976, p 180).

Noting the uneven findings obtained by researchers who attempted to replicate the Pygmalion study in other schools, Rosenbaum suggested that the extent to which teachers act on certain expectations they have of students depends on the degree to which school policies make the expectations relevant. The original Pygmalion research was conducted in a school with an elaborate tracking program, based on presumed abilities of individuals. This made the fictitious assessments more relevant to teachers there than in schools with less pronounced tracking; teachers had reason to be on the lookout for pupils who were inappropriately placed. Rosenbaum surmised that the impact of teacher expectations on students is, in large measure, a function of school structures and institutionalized practices.

In day-to-day classroom interaction, the responses given to individual pupils frequently depend on even less reliable cues than test scores. As members of their community, teachers are apt to share prevalent standards and to make judgments based on appearances in the same way that their

fellow citizens do. Generalized reactions to superficial subcultural or class differences -- such as speech, dress, manners, and surnames -- are likely to occur in the classroom, just as they do in the world outside. A study of high school tracking by Polk and Schafer indicated that students from lower class family backgrounds have a disproportionately high chance of winding up in low ability tracks, *even when their measured IQ scores and previous grades are no lower than those of other students* (Polk and Schafer, 1972). The external signs of low social status also may put these same students at a disadvantage with respect to expectations communicated in the classroom. This applies to expectations for troublesome behavior (discussed in the section above on early identification), as well as for poor performance.

Although less well documented, there is reason to believe that damaging interaction occurs in the home as well. Here it takes the form of unfavorable expectations communicated by parents or siblings. An important source of these expectations is information received from the school. When derogatory report cards, interim reports,* and other communications are sent from school to home, parents may align their expectations with those of their child's teachers. With the same damning message coming from virtually all the important others in his or her life, a young person has little refuge from the effects of negative labeling.

Expectations for misconduct probably have a more direct effect on delinquency than those for poor performance, but both can operate not only to generate self-fulfilling prophecies through labeling effects but to weaken a young person's attachments to school and home. Interaction with parents and teachers can convey to a person that little will be lost by engaging in delinquent behavior. A reputation that already is at rock bottom cannot get worse, no matter what the person does.

According to bonding theory, ties to the conventional moral order can operate in several sectors but, for most young persons, the only conventional ties available are through home and school. Hirschi found that weakened attachments in either arena were related to delinquent behavior but noted that the set of school items accounted for more variance in delinquency than the father and mother items combined (Hirschi, 1976, p 128).

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*Chapter 3 of this volume reports on findings regarding the results of written messages sent by school personnel to notify parents that their child was in danger of failing certain courses. After parents received an interim report of this sort, students' already poor grades were three times as likely to get worse as they were to improve.

Likewise, Elliott and Voss found school factors more powerful than home factors in predicting delinquent behavior. The nature of interaction in the two settings is important in determining whether attachments to home and school will be weak or strong. The strength of these attachments is, in turn, related to the probability of delinquent behavior.

2.2.3 Programs Focusing on Interaction

Programs seeking to reduce delinquency by affecting interaction have included: (a) Direct intervention into gangs; (b) assembling temporary groups for therapeutic purposes; (c) creating task-oriented peer groups; and (d) training teachers, police, parents, and others who have regular contact with young persons in techniques of effective interaction.

Most detached gang worker projects have not had adequate evaluations, but Malcolm Klein found enough data to reach conclusions concerning the effectiveness of four such programs. He cited studies of a project conducted in Boston between 1954 and 1957 and a project conducted in Chicago between 1960 and 1966, both involving prolonged contact between youth workers and gang members. Neither effort demonstrated any reduction in delinquent behavior. In the Boston program, there was some increase in the seriousness of offenses in the "treated" gangs, as compared with a control sample of gangs. Klein himself studied two similar projects in the Los Angeles area.

On the basis of data from all four programs, Klein concluded that detached worker programs not only are ineffective in reducing delinquency, but may inadvertently contribute to gang violence (as cited by Kassebaum, 1974, pp 154-155). The only favorable effect shown was a slowing in recruitment of new members during the brief periods that old members held on to the jobs that the detached workers had helped them find. From the standpoint of differential association theory, workers' efforts to introduce "definitions unfavorable to violation of the law" had the unintended side effects of increasing the frequency and intensity of interaction within the gang.

Kassebaum summarized the findings on detached worker programs as follows:

> "By group programming, arranging activities for gang participation (dances and outings for example), mediating gang disputes, arranging or supervising truces between warring gangs, conferring status on a gang by the presence of a youth worker in its hangout, and a number of similar activities, the program recognizes the gang as an important neighborhood or municipal entity; it increases the basis of group interaction, providing both occasion and motivation for individuals to orient their conduct in terms of the gang. In so

doing the programs are increasing the cohesiveness of the gang, which, in turn, exerts greater group influence toward conformity. With gang cohesiveness increasing, the likelihood of both intergang violence and collective predatory activities increases, as well as the likelihood that police surveillance, often suspicious of the detached worker program, will increase; this situation in turn drives up the arrest rate for gang members who are being reached by the program." (Kassebaum, 1974, p 155).

A second type of program focusing on interaction has involved the creation of special therapeutic groups. An earlier section described the failure of most group counseling programs. Romig also reviewed the evaluations of eight "community residential programs" that involved relatively continuous guided group contacts in halfway houses, residential centers, and foster homes. In five of the eight programs, treatment subjects had greater subsequent criminal involvement than did controls. In two there were no significant differences between treatment and control subjects, and in one treatment subjects showed "improved physical, emotional, and intellectual functioning" (Romig, 1978, pp 149-158). Cressey has suggested that programs involving artificially created correctional groups typically are based on the erroneous assumption that taking care of personal needs or enabling individuals to rid themselves of undesirable psychological disorders will reduce criminality (Cressey, 1966, p 468).

A third approach is to create working groups of young persons. Some of these have succeeded in beautifying neighborhoods, assisting the elderly, and overcoming community resistance to group homes. The impact of these programs on delinquent behavior probably is quite variable. It was noted earlier that simply consuming a young person's time is unlikely to reduce delinquency. Increased contacts with peers engaged in law-abiding pursuits may or may not undermine the influence of prodelinquent affiliations. According to bonding theory, the ability of working groups to support conventional norms should depend on the degree to which the tasks involved make continued participation appear valuable to young persons.

A number of working groups have been built around a task that promises not only satisfying participation but a reduction in powerlessness. The most prevalent of these are youth advisory boards and planning groups. In principle, these carry the potential for diverting participants away from interaction favorable to misconduct and, at the same time, reducing their sense of futility (which Matza presented as a driving force in the commission of delinquent acts). In practice, youth on advisory boards frequently are those who are least likely to get into trouble anyway. Moreover, they often discover that they are just as powerless on an advisory board as off of it.

An ambitious recent example of a program promising both worthwhile involvement and a reduction of powerlessness for young persons is Children's Express. Coached by older teenagers, children from ages 8 to 13

engaged in investigative reporting of community conditions affecting them. Through publication of their own periodical and nationally televised hearings in Washington, D.C., the participants brought their findings to the attention of other young persons and the general public. Testimonials written by the children involved were favorable, but there was no systematic evaluation of the program.*

A fourth programmatic approach to interaction is to train adults who are in frequent contact with youth. (Parent training was discussed in an earlier section.) The content of typical programs to train teachers and representatives of law enforcement and juvenile justice has included pointers for listening better to what young persons say, avoiding unnecessary friction in interaction, understanding the problems that youngsters are likely to bring with them into the classroom, moving a group toward completion of a task, and the like. They frequently include reminders of the risk of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy, as described earlier in this monograph ("tell a kid often enough that he is bad, and you'll have a bad kid"). In short, persons exposed to this kind of training can come away with tools for improving the way they relate to youth. A problem may arise when they try to put some of the tools to work back in their home settings.

Like everyone else, teachers and police have roles that are governed in large measure by forces over which they have little control. Making them aware of what they do wrong in their contacts with youngsters may creat an earnest wish to change, but it does not bestow *permission* to change. Undesirable interaction in the classroom may reflect bureaucratic pressure far more than ignorance on the part of the teacher. Policies and practices of particular schools (tracking, for example) make certain flaws in the classroom setting virtually inevitable. As long as these policies and practices remain unchanged, the effects of further enlightenment of teachers will be limited and even can become counterproductive.

Enlightenment that cannot be put into practice means frustration, particularly where an aware teacher (or police officer or youth worker) is in a minority and receives no support from either the administration or his or her colleagues. A result of this frustration could be work by the teacher to change institutionalized policies and practices, but lone rangers are the exception, not the rule. A more frequent result is severance of relations with the organization, leaving behind a lesson to those that remain that it does not pay to buck the system, no matter what the possible benefits for young persons.

The remedy is to target not just on persons in regular contact with youth but on the organizations that employ them. The section that follows focuses on institutionalized organizational features.

2.3 Delinquency and the Social Structure

The previous sections of this chapter have examined explanations of

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*The information about Children's Express is based on correspondence and conversations with Bob Clampett from October to December, 1978.

delinquency and prevention programs, focusing first on individual youth, then on interaction. The emphasis of this section is on institutionalized features of the larger community, especially as manifested in policies and practices of organizations that affect young persons. The overall conclusion derived from contemporary theory and research findings is that organizational policies and practices affect interaction patterns and that these patterns, in turn, affect the behavior of individual youth. In this sense, the progression of material presented in this review is towards increasingly more fundamental causes of delinquency.

This is not a claim that the ultimate roots of delinquency reside in organization; others have observed, for example, that our overall economic system has inequity built into it and that lawlessness is part of the American tradition.* We do take the material reviewed to indicate that, *of those targets that are feasible for delinquency prevention programs to address*, organizational policies and practices have the broadest impact on delinquent behavior. We acknowledge the existence of more fundamental causes but recognize that drastic economic reform or alteration of the American heritage are beyond the scope of most delinquency prevention programs.

The main bodies of theory already presented are reviewed again here, this time from the standpoint of community institutions and organizations.

2.3.1 Labeling and Societal Reaction Theories

> ". . . *social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance*, and by applying these rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is *not* a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender.' The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label." (Becker, 1963, p 9).

This rather extreme statement of the labeling perspective by Howard Becker grew out of earlier work by Tannenbaum, Lemert, and others. Besides calling attention to the part played by social reactions in deviant behavior, it has generated frivolous criticism (e.g., "People will continue to set fire to buildings, whether or not we call them arsonists").

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*See Mabel A. Elliott, "Crime and the Frontier Mores," American Sociological Review, Vol 9, pp 185-192, 1944; Daniel Bell, "Crime As an American Way of Life," Antioch Review, Vol. 13, pp 131-154; and Charles Silberman, Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice, 1978 (cited in Time, November 6, 1978).

A common assumption held by advocates of this perspective is that the most damaging labels are those conferred by the justice system. On this basis, labeling theory becomes an explanation of repeated criminal or delinquent behavior, not of initial offenses. An official label of "delinquent," "criminal," "felon," etc. affects the expectations conveyed by others to the person labeled and eventually alters the person's self-concept to fit stereotypic traits associated with the label. Particularly in the case of younger persons, the process also may curtail opportunities for contacts with law-abiding others and lead to more associations with those who have been similarly labeled. The consequence is a greater likelihood of continued delinquency.

Empirical research bearing on labeling theory has indicated repeatedly that the judicial labels conferred are based not just on offenses committed but on social factors. Apprehension, booking, and referral to the court occur on a selective basis. A number of studies have found that selection at each step is influenced strongly by such non-offense-related factors as class, sex, race, and demeanor.* Thus, some young persons stand a disproportionate chance of receiving derogatory judicial labels for reasons other than the extent of their misconduct. Research findings on the effects of such labels have been less consistent.

As part of a larger study in 1967, Gold and Williams matched 35 apprehended offenders with 35 unapprehended offenders on sex, age, race, and number and kinds of offenses. The report of this substudy included the following:

> "The findings completely contradict the aims of our reform machinery. In 20 of the 35 pairs, the apprehended member subsequently committed more offenses that did his unapprehended match. Five pairs later committed an equal number of delinquent acts. In only 10 of the 35 pairs did the unapprehended control commit more offenses. Whatever it is that the authorities do once they have caught a youth, it seems to be worse than doing nothing at all, worse even than never apprehending the offender. Getting caught encourages rather than deters further delinquency." (Haney and Gold, 1973, p 52).

In a more recent longitudinal study, David Farrington examined the effects of public labeling on a sample of London youth. He compared changes in self-reported delinquent behavior over a 4-year period between youth who were adjudicated and those who were not. The two groups

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*See Goldman, 1963; Piliavin and Briar, 1964; Sullivan and Siegal, 1972; and Thornberry, 1973.

were matched on level of delinquent behavior reported at age 14, prior to any involvement with the justice system. The average delinquency score of youth who were publicly labeled after age 14 increased substantially, while the average score of matched nonlabeled youth decreased substantially.*

In 1972, Foster, Dinitz, and Reckless investigated the extent to which judicial labels disrupted the subsequent social interaction of a sample of delinquent boys. Only a small proportion of the boys interviewed felt seriously handicapped by their encounters with police or juvenile courts. Most did not notice any substantial change in interpersonal relationships with family, friends, or teachers (Foster, Dinitz, and Reckless, 1972). In another study, Fisher found no causal relation between judicial labeling (probation) and school performance. Differences between experimental and control subjects were about as great prior to the label as they were afterward (Fisher, 1972).

Investigating the impact of judicial processing on self-esteem, Dennis Bliss found nondelinquents had the most favorable overall self-concepts, followed by delinquents on probation, followed by delinquents in detention.** In an earlier study, Gary Jensen reported that the impact of official labeling on self-evaluations varied considerably by race and social class (Jenson, 1972, pp 84-103). In another study, John Hepburn reported "little impact" of police intervention on juveniles' perceptions of themselves when socioeconomic status and involvement in delinquent behavior were controlled.*** Data collected in a recent NIMH study of diversion indicated that damaging labeling effects (lower self-concepts) occurred when official processing was followed by treatment, but not when official processing was followed by nontreatment (Elliott, 1978).

Michael Chastain examined the effects on self-perceptions of both judicial labels and structural isolation in the school. His subjects were 1,227 Oregon youth, 303 of whom had records of delinquency. The relationship between self-perceptions and judicial processing turned out to be insignificant. Negative self-perceptions appeared to be determined far

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*David P. Farrington, "The Effects of Public Labeling," British Journal of Criminology, 17(2), 1977, pp 112-125, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts 9(4), pp 442-443. Curiously, the researcher is the coauthor of a work cited earlier that downplayed the possibility that labeling processes in school could account for the accuracy of teacher predictions of trouble.

**Dennis C. Bliss, The Effects of the Juvenile Justice System on Self-Concept, San Francisco: R & E Associates, Inc., 1977, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, 10(3), pp 297-298.

***John R. Hepburn, "The Impact of Police Intervention Upon Juvenile Delinquents," Criminology, 15(2), pp 235-262, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, 10(1), p 18.

more by isolation in school, as measured by low social or athletic participation or low grade point average. Among delinquent youth, continued favorable responses in school made a negative judicial label have little consequence for either self-perceptions or perceived future economic opportunities.*

These findings add weight to material already presented suggesting that the school is of paramount importance in affecting the perceptions and behavior of teenagers. The section on early identification reviewed the striking regularity with which teacher predictions of trouble tend to come true and suggested that this was due in large part to labeling effects. The section on interaction reviewed evidence that students live up to or down to teacher expectations in the classroom, as well as independent conclusions from two studies that school factors accounted for more variance in self-reported delinquency than did factors in the home. Further evidence comes from survey data collected by the Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation from youth in ten cities in 1974. In that study, negative labeling by teachers was more strongly associated with delinquent behavior than any other of ten factors checked, including negative labeling by parents (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975, p 351).

Although not conclusive, the combined evidence from research to date points to schools as more promising focal points than either the justice system or the home for efforts to decrease the delinquency-producing effects of negative labeling. As was noted earlier, a massive teacher training program is not an adequate answer. Most teachers already know better, but they also know what they have to do to satisfy the requirements of the organizations that employ them. In many schools, teachers may recognize the harmful effects of labeling, but they also recognize that *not* labeling would disrupt the system. Typically, the conflict is resolved in favor of the system or the teacher leaves.

The most appropriate target for a prevention program to hit is not the teacher but the ability grouping and other organizational policies that contribute to inappropriate negative labeling and systematically rob segments of the student population of their sense of competence, usefulness, and belonging. Ways of modifying mainstream school policies to reduce labeling and safeguards to observe when designing special in-school

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*Michael R. Chastain, Delinquency, the School Experience, and Conceptions of Self and Opportunities, Ann Arbor: Xerox University Microfilms, 1977-, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, 10(1), pp 21-22.

projects are described in Chapters 3 and 4 of this volume.

The emphasis here on labeling in schools does not mean that law enforcement and juvenile justice practices are unsuitable targets for delinquency prevention programs. There is ample evidence that judicial processing is associated with subsequent delinquent behavior; two such studies were presented in this section. However, the other findings reviewed give cause to question the degree to which harmful effects of contact with the justice system result from judicial *labels*. The main consequences of the labels themselves depend on what is done with them in the places where youth spend most of their time. For example, routine sharing of information between probation and school personnel can spell the difference between trivial and serious consequences. Where this organizational practice occurs, prevention practitioners can work with either schools or probation to curtail it.

2.3.2 Subcultural Theories

In their most extreme form, statements by subcultural theorists have described a disparity between lower and middle-class norms so great that lower or working-class youth must experience a double bind during a large part of their waking hours. No matter what they do, it will violate either the norms of their own class or those of the larger society. Walter Miller has pointed to six focal concerns that characterize lower-class life; (a) Trouble as a path to prestige; (b) toughness as a sign of masculinity; (c) smartness as a means to outwit others; (d) excitement as a way to obtain thrills; (e) a belief in fate as controlling one's destiny; and (f) overt resentment of external controls. Miller contends that several items on this list lead to pursuits that involve behavior defined by middle-class rules as delinquent (cited by Schur, 1973, pp 92-93).

Marvin Wolfgang and Franco Ferracuti have described a preference for resorting to violence in a variety of situations as a dominant subcultural theme. In situations where members of the dominant culture would feel guilt if they responded with violence, members of the subculture may find themselves in trouble with their associates if they do not. Albert Cohen has viewed differences in approved ways to achieve status as a major disparity between lower and middle-class beliefs. Lower class youth may try to make good, according to middle-class standards, but are likely to become frustrated and then seek status through illegitimate avenues.*

As reviewed in Preventing Delinquency, research to test these theories

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*Cited in Preventing Delinquency, NIJJDP, 1977, pp 65-68.

has shown that lower class youth are more likely than middle-class youth to have trouble achieving status through legitimate means, are somewhat less accepting of middle-class proscriptive (but not prescriptive) norms, and are less likely to associate guilt with violence. However, a recurring implication of the findings is that many subcultural differences have been overstated (NIJJDP, 1977, pp 65-68). This conclusion is amplified by evidence cited earlier that lower class youth disapprove of delinquent behavior, and so do adjudicated delinquents, and that ties with criminal parents are associated with *non*delinquent behavior, in the same way as ties with noncriminal parents.*

While there are some obvious differences among different segments of the population, the extent of any direct connection with delinquent behavior is questionable. We argue here that the connection between subcultural differences and delinquency is, in large part, a consequence of organizational reactions to those differences. By turning everyday stereotypes and the exaggerated pictures painted by some theorists into institutionalized practices, the organizations with which young persons are in regular contact *create* a link between even superficial variations in dress, speech and manner, and delinquent behavior. These variations come to have serious consequences because of a presumption that they signify a wide array of undesirable traits, such as inability to learn and a craving for trouble.

Although making police and teachers aware of the richness of a variety of ethnic and cultural traditions may inject a missing element of respect into their conversations with some young persons, prime targets of prevention programs should be instances where stereotypic presumptions are reflected in organizational policies. These are policies that give all youth who share a particular background characteristic a strike against them, regardless of their behavior. As reported in the section on labeling and in the earlier discussions of socioeconomic level and family, the choice of disposition for a young person in contact with the justice system often depends heavily on background characteristics having no demonstrated connection to delinquent behavior. Disproportionate police surveillance of "bad" neighborhoods or certain categories of youth is another example of prejudgment turned into official policy.

School policy can have similar inequitable consequences, sometimes on a grand scale. In a recent interview, a member of the Denver Board of Education bemoaned the organizational inconvenience caused by court-ordered busing. The busing had forced the Denver Public School System to discontinue its policy of sending different reading packages to individual schools. The Board member reported that there had been special packages for schools

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*The findings cited are those of Matza, Hirschi, and Kratcoski and Kratcoski.

in disadvantaged neighborhoods where reading readiness skills were thought to be minimal. Other packages were designed for students in more affluent neighborhoods where the preschool learning environment was presumed to be more positive. The solution to the inconvenience caused by busing has been escalated ability grouping policies, which have appeared to some to perpetuate racial segregation. The Denver Community Education Council recently filed charges to this effect against the school system. The Board member is quoted as saying:

> "Most of the minority children are from disadvantaged homes. A real correlation between maternal malnutrition and retardation has been established. We would be doing students an injustice if we didn't take this sort of thing into consideration." (Rocky Mountain News, 17 January 1979, p 5).

Neither the police and school policies just described nor the City of Denver are isolated examples. Similar official procedures affect large numbers of youngsters throughout the country. While it is not the purpose of delinquency prevention programs to eliminate all sources of inequity and unfairness, there is good reason to believe that policies of the sort presented here *produce delinquent behavior*. This qualifies them as critical program targets. Their connection with delinquency is discussed further in Section 2.3.4.

2.3.3 Strain and Opportunity Theories

As originally formulated by Robert Merton, strain theory posits that, in our society, the same worthwhile goals tend to be held out as desirable to everyone. This becomes a problem because legitimate avenues for achieving those goals are not open equally to all. The combination of equality of goals and inequality of opportunity regularly makes it impossible for some segments of the population to play by the rules and still get what they want. As a consequence, some people turn to illegitimate means to achieve culturally prescribed goals, while others may reject both the goals and the means and retreat socially, either by removing themselves physically or by using alcohol and drugs. Thus, a disjunction in the social structure is a cause of crime and delinquency.*

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*Robert K. Merton (1938) describes two modes of adaption besides the ones presented here: Ritualism, the continued acceptance of means and rejection of goals; and rebellion, the rejection of goals and means and establishment of new ones in their place.

Cloward and Ohlin subsequently applied Merton's formulation to explain lower class gang delinquency, depicting the gang as a source of illegitimate opportunities for success. They introduced a new element into the theory by noting that some youth are denied access to gangs and are thereby cut off from illegitimate, as well as legitimate, opportunity (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960). This provided a partial answer to the criticism that the original theory did not account adequately for disadvantaged nondelinquents. Like subcultural explanations, strain and opportunity theories have helped perpetuate a view of delinquency as mainly a lower-class activity.

Critics of this explanation have pointed to long periods of non-delinquent behavior by presumably frustrated persons, as well as the fact that most delinquent boys eventually become law-abiding adults, as weaknesses of strain theory (Hirschi, 1969, pp 6-10). An answer to the criticism is that frustration surrounds particular events which, like delinquent behavior, occur only sporadically and occur less frequently during adulthood than during youth.

Empirical research has provided both partial support for strain theory and fuel for its critics. Associations between perceptions of blocked opportunities and involvement in delinquent behavior have been positive, as predicted by the theory, but the relationship between aspiration level and delinquency repeatedly has been either *negative or* insignificant.* The latter finding bears on strain theory insofar as one can assume that the gap between aspiration and opportunity is likely to be larger for persons having high aspirations.

The discussion of the "attachment" component of bonding theory (below) suggests that a distinction ought to be made between aspirations perceived as realistic and those perceived as relatively unattainable.

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*With respect to perceptions of blocked opportunities, see Stephen A. Cernkovich, Juvenile Delinquency, Value Standards, and Socioeconomic Status: An Examination of a Non-Class-Specific Perspective, Ann Arbor: Xerox University Microfilms, 1977, cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts, 9(2), pp 193-194. Recent findings on aspiration level appear in City Life and Delinquency--Victimization, Fear of Crime and Gang Membeship, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1977.

One observer has noted that the gross data may conceal cases where young persons with high hopes suddenly come to see those hopes as unrealistic and as a consequence turn to delinquent behavior.*

Programs designed to equalize opportunity have been widespread, ranging from Head Start to large-scale employment programs for older youth. Many of these carry a potential for delinquency prevention, but that potential is explained better by bonding theory than by strain and opportunity theories.

2.3.4 Bonding and Control Theories

As outlined earlier, bonding theorists maintain that most people stay out of trouble most of the time because they are bonded to the conventional norms of society through their affiliations with a variety of entities. Dominant among these entities are home, school, church, and the work place. As long as ties to at least one of these remain strong, an individual is likely to conform to the rules. Refining earlier work of Nye and others, Hirschi described four control processes through which conformity is maintained. The first of these was mentioned earlier; it is what Hirschi termed *commitment* and refers to the degree to which a person has interests that misconduct would jeopardize. With respect to this rational component in conformity, Hirschi wrote that

> "the person invests time, energy, himself, in a certain line of activity -- say, getting an education, building up a business, acquiring a reputation for virtue. When or whenever he considers deviant behavior, he must consider the costs of this deviant behavior, the risks he runs of losing the investment he has made in conventional behavior." (Hirschi, 1969, p 20).

The investment, or stake, may include not only an immediate desirable position but a realistic promise of status in the near future. On this count, high aspirations should be negatively associated with delinquent behavior, *provided that they are perceived as attainable over a relatively short term.* There is no necessary contradiction between this element of bonding theory and the central theme of strain theory. The greater the

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*Robert Coates based this suggestion on his observation of Massachussetts youth whose aspiration levels were raised during treatment in therapeutic communities. Upon their return home, many of these youth found that their newly acquired hopes did not match the realities of everyday life.

gap between aspirations and opportunity, the less likely the aspirations will be perceived as attainable, and the less they will consitute a stake in conformity. Both theories provide support for programs designed to enhance youth opportunity.

A second process is *attachment* to other people. To violate the norm is to act contrary to the wishes and expectations of others; a low level of attachment makes violation more likely. A third process is *involvement*, or engrossment in conventional activities; it refers to one's ongoing allocation of time and energy (as opposed to one's past investment of these resources). As noted earlier, only certain time and energy allocations that are bound up directly with conventional ties serve a control function. Hirschi found that the amount of time spent watching television, engaging in sports, and reading magazines was unrelated to delinquent behavior, but that time spent doing homework was associated with lower delinquency, even when classroom grades were controlled.

The fourth control process is *belief* in the moral validity of social rules (Hirschi, 1969, pp 16-26). For the youth in Hirschi's sample, there was a significant relationship, as predicted, between attachment and commitment to home and school and respect for the law. But the data indicated that something more than these conventional affiliations played an important part in determining belief. Lack of respect for the police was moderately associated both with lack of respect for the law and with delinquent behavior, *even among youth who had never had contact with the police.* Those expressing low respect for the police were more likely to agree with the statement, "It is alright to get around the law if you can get away with it." Hirschi discusses these findings as follows:

> "When the only thing that stands between a man and violation of the law are considerations of expediency, for him the state of anomie has arrived. He has accepted a definition favorable to the violation of law; he is by no means constrained to violate the law, but he is free to violate the law if it appears that it would be to his advantage to do so. . .There is variation in the extent to which boys believe they should obey the law, and the less they believe they should obey it, the less likely they are to do so." (Hirschi, 1969, pp 202-203).

A relationship between negative attitudes towards the police and delinquent behavior is not a surprising finding; it has shown up repeatedly in prior research. Some have taken it to signify merely that delinquents are more likely to have had unpleasant encounters with police. Hirschi's evidence indicates that lack of respect can occur independently of such contacts and be affected by the image projected by representatives of law enforcement and, presumably, of the broader juvenile justice system.

To be effective, the four control processes -- commitment, attachment, involvement and belief -- must operate through affiliations with group and organizational representatives of convention. The stronger the ties, the greater the control. The closeness of an affiliation in any one sector is likely to fluctuate, but most people have a multiplicity of important conventional ties. During periods when there is no stake worth protecting in the work place, the family and other community memberships remain as sources of control. Freedom to engage in misconduct comes only when all important affiliations are in a disintegrated state at once. For most adults, their sheer number of ties makes this an extremely rare occurrence.

This is not true for youth who, typically, have their eggs in far fewer baskets than adults do. The only important conventional affiliations for most young persons are school and family. When these deteriorate, there usually is nothing left. In practice, many youth do not even have the luxury of two independent affiliations. Trouble at school can mean automatic trouble at home, due to the widespread practice of sending bad news to parents and the tendency of many parents to decrease rather than increase their support when such news arrives.

One implication of bonding theory for delinquency prevention programming is to broaden the range of possible conventional ties open to young persons. The major prospect here is in the employment sector. As discussed earlier, most youth work programs have demonstrated little success. Part of the problem may stem from the assumptions on which the programs were based. In a program based on the folk notion that "idle hands are the Devil's workshop," any work that consumes time should reduce delinquency. In a program based on strain theory, any work that provides legitimate income should reduce delinquency. Both research and the experience of the past programs have demonstrated that neither assumption is adequate.

Bonding theory indicates that employment that creates an affiliation that the young worker does not want to jeopardize through misconduct is more likely to be effective in prevention than employment that merely provides involvement in a conventional pursuit. This alone should deter delinquent behavior. If the stake is accompanied by valued attachments to other people, so much the better.*

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*Daniel Glaser (1978) has offered pointers for employment programs in general and for building interpersonal attachments of youth on the job in particular.

Another possible locus for broadening the range of conventional ties is the church. Within Consitutional limitations, work in this arena could address ways to make religious affiliations sufficiently attractive to be counted as valuable by an increased proportion of the youth population (e.g., by providing opportunities for community service).

A second implication for prevention programming is to improve the images of local law enforcement and juvenile justice. A public relations program may help but is likely to be perceived as meaningless hype if seemingly discriminatory practices in surveillance, apprehension, booking, and adjudication are allowed to persist. The justice system also should be a target of efforts to halt routine sharing of derogatory information with schools.

A third implication is to reduce the obstacles that frequently stand in the way of close ties with the school. Each of the other theories described so far offers clues to the nature of these obstacles. School policies that inappropriately label, that discriminate on the basis of subcultural differences, and that restrict opportunity all operate to keep the affiliation weak for some youth and thereby rob the four control processes described above of their effectiveness. As already discussed, unfavorable interaction in the classroom is only part of the problem. A prime target of delinquency prevention programs should be the official dictates and less formal entrenched practices that not only contribute to alienating classroom interaction but operate to structure the entire school experience of some youth in ways that make it virtually impossible for them to perceive any valuable affiliation.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has presented a critical review of contemporary explanations of causes of delinquency and means used to prevent it. The purpose has been to narrow the field under consideration to a few relatively promising approaches and, thereby, establish boundaries for the succeeding chapters of this volume. The prevention programs examined can be grouped into five categories: (a) Those that should be rejected as having no defensible basis: (b) those that should be rejected because they represent inappropriate or ineffective implementation of a defensible explanation of delinquency; (c) those whose merit is highly questionable in light of evidence to date; (d) those that offer short-term benefits or benefits to limited numbers at substantial cost; and (e) those with promise of broad and lasting benefits at moderate cost.

2.4.1 Programs Having No Defensible Basis

Explanations of delinquent behavior based on presumed personality differences, presumed biological differences, and a presumed connection

between learning disabilities and delinquency have been subject to intense scrutiny and are not supported. On the basis of the evidence, individual psychotherapy, group counseling, casework, and other program efforts to apply these explanations should be rejected. In addition, early identification or selection for treatment based on personality test scores, individual socioeconomic level, intact vs. broken homes, or criminal histories of parents is not recommended. All of these factors have been found to have little or no utility in predicting delinquent behavior.

2.4.2 Programs that Represent Inappropriate or Ineffective Implementation of Defensible Explanations of Delinquency

Despite having some plausible theoretical or correlational basis, a number of programs should be rejected on the basis of their repeated failure to demonstrate effectiveness in reducing delinquency after having been tried and evaluated. These include behavior modification confined to treatment settings, wilderness programs without followup in clients' home communities, most forms of family therapy, recreation programs, employment programs that merely consume time, detached work in street gangs, and increasing the severity of punishment for wrongdoing. In addition, there are logical grounds for believing the following to be ineffective prevention practices: Admonishing young persons to associate with a better crowd; lecturing youth on the merits of respecting parents, teachers, or representatives of the justice system using individual treatment to counter the effects of negative labeling; and persuading young persons to reduce their aspirations.

2.4.3 Programs Having Highly Questionable Merit Based on Evidence to Date

Foremost in this category is early identification of predelinquents, based on teacher ratings or judgments. The evidence to date makes an alternative explanation of the apparent success of these predictions at least as plausible as the assumption that teachers are uncanny judges of character. The risk of generating more delinquency appears to outweigh any benefits associated with this kind of program. A second type of program in this category is that focusing expressly on parents of infants or very young children. The assumption that "it's all over" at an early age appears grossly overdrawn, in light of the evidence to date.

2.4.4 Programs Offering Limited Benefits at Substantial Cost per Client

A number of programs show promise for short-term effectiveness for limited numbers of youth. Noncoercive programs to teach parents social learning theory and monitor their use of it have had favorable evaluations to date; they appear to be effective in reducing troublesome behavior, at least for children aged 5 through 13. Providing individual youth with vocational skills and "middle-class polish" is a way to enhance opportunities for a few, provided that recruitment is nonstigmatizing. In addition, elements of a hypothetical individual treatment program were listed, combining worwhile bits and pieces from a number of existing programs. These

approaches have prospects for immediate results on a small scale, but they have two substantial drawbacks. First, working with individuals or small groups is costly, even over a short period; when requisite long-term followup is added, the cost per client is likely to become enormous. Second, programs targeted on individuals or their families must be repeated endlessly. Even in the unlikely event that everyone in a community could receive the services they need at one point in time, the process still would have to occur perpetually to keep pace with population turnover and maturation. A more cost-efficient category of program is training of teachers, police, and others in regular contact with youth. This approach has the shortcoming that policies of the organizations that employ those trained may limit their opportunity to apply what they learn.

2.4.5 Programs Promising Broad and Lasting Benefits at Moderate Cost

The review of contemporary explanations of delinquency and prevention program experiences to date points to selective organizational change as the approach having the most promise. The evidence reviewed identifies the school as paramount in the lives of most youth, so it is nominated as a primary target of efforts to bring about change. Recommended programs in this category include those directed at modifying ability grouping and other school policies that generate inappropriate labeling and systematically rob segments of the student population of opportunities to demonstrate usefulness and competence, thereby making it difficult for some youth to value their affiliation in this arena. Also recommended are: (a) Programs to modify organizational practices (in schools, justice, and the world of work) that reflect stereotypic presumptions of undesirable traits among youth having certain socioeconomic, racial, or ethnic backgrounds; (b) work to improve the images of law enforcement and juvenile justice: (c) programs to broaden the range of conventional ties available to youth, particularly in the areas of work and community service; (d) "mainstreaming" of instruction in parenting and other life experiences in schools; (e) programs designed to reduce youth perceptions of powerlessness; and (f) steps to reduce the flow of derogatory news from school to home or from the juvenile justice system to school. All such programs are viewed as addressing more fundamental causes of delinquency than the bulk of efforts targeted on individuals or on group interaction.

Programs to accomplish selective organizational change, as well as the more promising of self-contained programs, are described in the succeeding chapters of this volume. Further detail on selected programs in these categories also will appear in four forthcoming Delinquency Prevention Technical Assistance Working Papers.

3. DELINQUENCY PREVENTION AS SELECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The most direct and immediate implication of the well-supported delinquency theories is that there are arrangements and processes in contemporary social institutions that generate delinquent behavior; to reduce delinquent behavior, these arrangements and processes should be altered. The most fruitful arenas for delinquency prevention initiatives are education, work, and community service, broadly defined, and their interactions with each other and with families. For almost all youth, these are the main contexts for socialization, bonding, the provision and pursuit of economic and social opportunities, and labeling -- the processes central to generating and preventing delinquent behavior. Other arenas, such as recreation, are much less important and less promising as bases for delinquency prevention.

In what follows, schooling receives the greatest attention; it is taken as central in the interaction with work and community service on the one hand, and with families on the other. As confirmed by research reported in Chapter 2, the situation of youth in American society is bound up with schooling, and the academic role is paramount. Substantial evidence points to some forms of the organization and processes of schooling as main contributors to delinquent behavior. Initiatives to alter the effects of schooling are the centerpiece of delinquency prevention.

Our intent is to present a case for improving the school setting and experience. The discussion is of the *organization* of schooling, not the characteristics of school personnel. To a large degree, the organization of schooling reflects the expectations, requirements, and demands of society as a whole. Attributing deleterious organizational features to incompetence or ill will among school personnel would be inaccurate, unfair, and unfruitful.

Attributing the consequences of organizational features to characteristics of young persons who attend the school would be similarly inappropriate. We do not suggest options by which school would be similarly inappropriate. We do not suggest options by which school personnel may easily dispose of those youth they regard as troublemakers. Visible trouble in schools stems in large part from the organization of the schools, and reorganization is needed to reduce that trouble and to make schools a more desirable environment for both students and employees. The main involvement of school personnel in delinquency prevention should focus on redesigning schooling, not on personal self-improvement.

Anticipating the argument that schools are asked to do too much already, we maintain that this concentration on schools does not constitute yet another burden on that system. There is no demand here to add another program to the list of services provided by schools, no

request for an additional curriculum. Rather, the point is that some of the ways in which schooling is conducted and educational goals are sought in practice are active contributors to delinquent behavior. The recommendations are for modification of existing school practices. In many cases, preferred educational policy and practice and delinquency prevention policy and practice are identical. At the very least, the goals and practices of delinquency prevention do not contradict nor compete with legitimate and desirable educational practices.

In the area of work and community service, we are interested both in the paths and barriers to adult work roles and in the functions of work for youth *while they are youth*. For the reasons presented in Chapter 2, the discussion is not solely of "jobs," in the narrow sense of any paying activity, but deals more broadly with an array of community involvements that permit and support young persons to be useful to others and provide a stake in conventional, law-abiding activity.

Recommendations bearing on the family pertain to the interaction between home and school. In addition, a suggestion is made for "mainstreaming" instruction in parenting skills of the sort found to be effective in evaluations reported in Chapter 2. The influence of other institutional sectors on what happens in the home and their more tangible organization make them feasible focal points for efforts to indirectly affect the family.

3.1 Options for Selective Organizational Change in Schools

From an early age, children's lives increasingly are organized around schooling. By the junior and senior high age, schooling has become the main organizing element in young persons' lives. This is not a simple result of time spent in places -- in hallways and classrooms versus on the streets or at home. It is a consequence of the values almost universally attached to formal education, of widely shared expectations that the "work" of young persons is to be students, of the widely shared view of schools as the gatekeepers of adult success, and of opportunities for association with peers and involvement in various recreations.

Schooling pervades the lives of young persons to a degree not accurately reflected simply by the time they spend in school buildings. Much interaction with parents has to do with interest, problems, and standing in schools. One's peers tend to be those in similar positions with respect to schools; the choice of associates after school is likely to be a school-related matter. The pervasiveness of schooling for youth is reflected in the first name that comes to mind for youth who are of school age but not in school -- dropout.

In the same way that the role of student dominates the lives of young persons, a relatively narrow array of academic, cognitive, and

behavioral expectations dominates the role of student. Thus is created a very narrow path to adulthood. This passage is fraught with difficulties for many youth, and many of those difficulties contribute directly to delinquent behavior.

> "Poor academic performance, substandard achievement, negative feelings toward teachers and the school, low self-esteem in the face of failure, and depressed educational aspirations indicate a lack of attachment and commitment to an important unit of socialization and control. This apparently cumulative cycle of educational failure cannot be traced only to inherent differences in ability because there is too much evidence which suggests that the inadequacies of the public education system are primarily responsible for these failures. Attachment and commitment to education can only become possible for more youngsters through changes in the prevailing conceptions and organization of the education system. Schools should organize their programs in order that more children can develop a bond to conventional lines of action that are relevant to adult roles in society." (Preventing Delinquency, 1977, p 38).

Therefore, we must examine the consequences for delinquency of the values, structure, and interactions of schooling, both as independently related to delinquent behavior and as highly influential elements of the network that includes work and community involvement and family life.

Nowhere in this volume will schools or the people who inhabit them be presented as malicious, stupid, lazy, badly trained, incompetent, rigid, out of date, or out of tune. On the other hand, readers will find us struggling with the inevitable recognition that schools are central to the lives and future prospects of young people. Schools *do* make a difference, and we cannot have it both ways: To the extent that we acknowledge that schools have the resources to mold our young people into successful, productive, law-abiding citizens, we also must seek there the influences that result -- for some young people -- in failure, alienation, and delinquency.

In a world in which our troubles as well as our accomplishments are complex and in which the place of education is so prominent, discussions of major social issues frequently come to rest on the shoulders of the public schools. With respect to delinquency, the further case can be made that some of the routine ways that schools go about their business in fact contribute to trouble for young people; thus, schools are an appropriate focus of delinquency prevention efforts. Nonetheless, we probably should not expect that schools will welcome these as wonderful new ideas to be implemented next Monday. In fact, we can anticipate one or both of two responses.

First, several of these suggestions may be perceived as sufficiently close to things the school already sees itself doing that the response will be, "But we're already doing that." Whether correct or not, the announcement that a school is engaged in the kinds of improvement activities recommended here (either through a self-contained program or by the effort to improve school climate overall) can be met most productively by a conversation about the nature of the program, the number and type of participants, the scale, the responses of participants (including other teachers), the image of the activities within the school and among schools in the district, and so forth. If the school has struggled through changes like those envisioned here, a record of that experience can advance knowledge and practice in other schools. For example, the work of Cleveland High School in Seattle can enrich our description of ways to manage change. If the school misunderstands the nature of the recommendations offered here, only careful examination of existing practice will reveal the discrepancies.

Second, one can anticipate a response on the order of "They won't let us do that," where "they" may include the Federal government, State legislators, parents or the community at large, or the central district administration. The changes entertained here will result in students' expanded participation in activities, expanded participation with adults both in and out of school, and increased visibility in places other than the school between the hours of eight and three on weekdays. For schools to serve as the principal managers of changes such as these, schools must be protected (or must seek ways of protecting themselves) from the charge that they are being irresponsible in "turning kids loose on the streets," in "relaxing standards for good work," and so forth.

In our conversations with school personnel, a frequent response has been that any attempts at innovation are met with letters to the editor and complaints that teachers or principals are not doing their proper jobs. The intent to initiate change will have to be accompanied by interactions designed to prepare parents and others for the change, and to generate enough breathing space to try something out. Efforts to generate not only tolerance but *active support* from selected influential persons in the community are recommended.

In sum, we make these recommendations with the full understanding that acting on them will require attention, on the one hand, to what Sarason (1971) calls the "culture of the school" and, on the other hand, to the broader organizational and political setting in which the schools operate.

3.1.1 Values

In schools, as in any social situation (family, work, law), *values* (spoken or unspoken agreement on what's important) are the basis for the

the activities we declare to be relevant and appropriate, for assessing the worth of activities, and for judging the merits of persons. A problem lies in the extent to which the values depicted and attainable *in schools* are persuasive or compelling to young persons -- are of a character such that young persons could develop a commitment to them and have a stake in schooling. In light of the evidence presented in Chapter 2, we argue here that the expression of and emphasis on certain values in schools are related to delinquency and could, therefore, be the focus of delinquency prevention efforts.

In particular, there are two aspects of school-related values that deserve attention here. First is the range of activity valued in and supported by schools: Compared to the range of worthwhile, valued human activity found in any community, a rather narrow array of specific academic competencies is stressed in schools. Frequently, this emphasis on narrowly academic performance (primarily cognitive and language-bound) is tied to an equally heavy emphasis on finishing high school to enter colleges and universities to obtain managerial and professional employment. This situation sometimes is described in terms of the relevance -- or irrelevance -- of schooling for many young persons.

Conversely, competencies other than academic and destinations other than high-status jobs are devalued. The possibilities for many youth to assign relevance and value to schooling -- to develop a stake in and commitment to schooling -- thus are drastically narrowed. The persuasiveness of schools with young persons thus is reduced and the effectiveness schools as agents of socialization and social control correspondingly diminished.

A second aspect involves the correspondence or consonance between the values or goals that are to be sought and the legitimate opportunities for achieving them. The more limited the opportunities for legitimate attainment of widely shared goals and values and the more limited the stake in schooling, the more likely it is that youth will be alienated from school and the more likely it is that there will be delinquent behavior. Goals and the opportunities to attain them can be brought into better alignment either by increasing opportunities or by modifying aspirations. Later sections will suggest modifications of opportunity. Here, the argument is for the social regulation of aspirations. That is, by modifying the emphasis on certain values, some of the more poignant disjunctions between aspirations and opportunities can be relieved. This argument is not intended to dupe persons into accepting what they already have, to make their aspirations coincide with their present status. Particularly, the argument is not intended to justify present inequities in the distribution of opportunity.

3.1.1.1 Some Suggestions for Change

The problems associated with values in schools lead to recommendations for adjusting the expression of what is valuable and for placing

different emphasis on various values. The following subsections describe several relevant value areas, with suggested directions of renegotiation and redescription.*

3.1.1.1.1 Less Emphasis Should be Placed on Winning in Competitive Ventures, as Compared with Contributing to Cooperative Ventures

By definition, a competition produces only one or a few winners and, for the notion of winning to make any sense, there must be losers. Losers have considerably less stake in the enterprise. By contrast, cooperative ventures require the skills and energies of many, and all can be contributors whose parts are valued. The emphasis on competition in schools often is claimed to be merely a reflection of a competitive society. Although the argument contains a grain of truth, it appears to be inappropriately overplayed in a system of universal public education.

The depiction of American society as mainly a competition of individuals each against all is more an ideological figment than a practical reality. A society is possible at all only by virtue of extensive cooperation, substantial human accomplishments are impossible without skillful cooperation, and the competition for rank or place in any activity is possible only within and by virture of a larger, more important, pattern of cooperation. Therefore, we argue that a perceived need to create losers is more a manifestation of organizational logic internal to the education system than a reflection of societal needs.

Further, for the large majority of persons involved in any activity, the satisfaction or reward of the activity must come from its intrinsic appeal and from extrinsic merits other than winning: From the gains in competence that may be achieved, even though the highest competence is not achieved; from the usefulness of the activity to others, although it does not bring the highest awards for oneself; from the grace of the activity or the beauty or utility of its product, although it may not set the standard of excellence; from the opportunity to belong among others engaged in the activity, even though this is not the adulation that may be accorded a winner.

In the extreme case, the overemphasis on winning in competitions may lead persons to place winning above other values, such as telling the truth, being loyal to friends, avoiding harm to others, and being useful. (Similarly, overemphasis on winning can lead schools to organize graduation ceremonies, other ceremonial occasions, and even daily classroom experience so that only a small handful of the students involved are recognized or celebrated in any way.) The less extreme (and more common)

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*Ways of managing renegotiation will be addressed in later sections.

difficultly is that a preoccupation with winning tends to depreciate and mask the values in which the attraction and stake in an activity must lie for most persons.

An emphasis on cooperative engagement with the intrinsic merits of worthwhile human activities seems most consonant with the idea of public education.

3.1.1.1.2 The Value of a Wide Array of Occupations Necessary to Society Should be Emphasized, in the Place of a Narrow Emphasis on the Value of a Relatively Few High-Status Positions

One of the things young persons appear to be doing, in the secondary school years, is estimating what sort of occupation, if not the exact occupation, they would like to pursue or will settle for. Judgments of this sort appear to be informed by models and information provided by parents, friends, and the media, as well as the schools. When the occupations one is interested in, or strives towards, or expects to settle for, receive little attention, are attributed little value, or even are devalued in themselves, then a significant component of possible relevance and attraction in schooling is lost. In making this recommendation, we do recognize that the nominal (perfunctory) inclusion of something in the school curriculum is not the same as actively valuing it; in fact, the addition of devalued activities to a curriculum may only make more visible their denigrated status.

3.1.1.1.3 A Broader Array (Including Social, Civic, Practical, and Academic Pursuits) Should be Recognized as Valuable, in Place of a Narrow Emphasis on a Limited Array of Particularly Academic Competencies and Performances

These pursuits may range from involvement in local government to providing community service as a volunteer to balancing a checkbook and obtaining favorable interest rates, all of which are quite relevant to managing a life, taken as an enterprise distinct from, if sometimes including, managing college. It often is said that critical academic skills -- reading, writing, calculating -- are basic to many endeavors and generally to getting along in a complex society. It also often is the case that such skills are presented, dealt with, and rewarded almost exclusively as preparation for further academic work.

3.1.1.1.4 Enhance the Number and Kinds of Ways that Persons and Groups of All Racial, Ethnic, and Socioeconomic Character are Made to Feel that They Belong and that They Have Prospects for Educational and Social Success

A familiar complaint, especially in recent years, is that schools "push out" large numbers of students by reflecting and approving only a

very narrow set of interests, aspirations, activities, and notions of appropriate behavior. Those who do not share or enact those interests, aspirations, and behavior run a greater risk of not succeeding and not belonging -- and ultimately being pushed, dropped, or kicked from school. By some of the artifacts of membership in racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups that students display (and independent of their abilities and intentions), many young people may risk the approbation of administrators, teachers, fellow students, parents, and others who interpret certain dress, speech, interests, activities, and styles of interaction as signs of incompetence, hostility, disinterest, or the absence of moral rectitude."

The argument for increased tolerance of, and support for, a variety of groups and for their interests, aspirations, and ways of behaving is an argument for a pluralistic school. That is not a new argument, and it is easier to argue than to do. It is evident by now that the physical copresence of several groups, or the curricular offering of Black Studies and the like, is not sufficient to produce pluralism. The evidence that all groups belong and have a stake in the school* must be reflected in the interactions of teachers and students or students with each-other, in the conduct of classroom business and hallway encounters, in the design of the curriculum and decisions about placement, in advice offered to students, and in sanctions (positive and negative) for behavior. One should be able to listen to classroom lessons, pick up class texts and materials, witness hallway interactions, observe extracurricular activities, review disciplinary records or the honor roll and find on a frequent, regular, and routine basis that there is room for the styles, interests, histories, speech, dress, and interactional styles of all groups.

3.1.1.2 Limits on the Realignment of Values

It should be recognized here that the values emphasized in schooling are not specifications to be rewritten at will but are a set of widely shared agreements, not only among school personnel but also among many members of a community, which must be renegotiated. One may ask to what degree school personnel are free to renegotiate the expression of values in schools, given community and parent expectations for schooling and

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*For a description of the dilemma created for many lower class youth, see Arthur Pearl's "Youth in Lower-Class Settings," in The Value of Youth, 1978.

*Howard (1978), reporting on the efforts of Cleveland High School to "turn around" a history of violence, vandalism, and absenteeism, notes that one of the early tasks was to move students from a loyalty exclusively to their own group to a loyalty to the school.

given present and possible educational practice. This is, of course, an empirical question, the answer to which must be discovered in a given case. It may be found that, in many instances school personnel overestimate the extent to which their hands are tied.

In general, it appears there is considerable latitude. Community concern with such problems as school violence, vandalism, truancy, dropout, and disruption, as well as concern for pervasive drug and alcohol abuse, for alternative forms of education better suited to more populations of students, and for practical or basic education all appear to lend themselves to the renegotiation of a definition of a school in which more young persons can become productively engaged and can belong. Although it is by no means the sole development in education, there is a lively and expanding body of work* on the practical possibilities.

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*Recent descriptions of producing change in "school climate" address the prospects, problems, and processes of attempting change that will expand opportunities for all to belong and have a stake in the school. The approach produces smoother intergroup relations (among students, and between students and teachers), improved academic achievement and rates of completion (lower dropout rates), greater order and stability (lower violence, vandalism, and disruption), and higher rates of attendance. The descriptions are relatively detailed and results impressive. The best single source of materials and further references on this line of work in schools is CADRE (Collegial Associates for the Development and Renewal of Educators), Publications Department, University of Oklahoma, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

For practical examples on a modest scale of the way in which youth roles can be strengthened and expanded in school and community settings, see New Roles for Youth in School and the Community by the National Commission on Resources for Youth (1974).

The extensive literature on alternative schools is valuable, particularly for the descriptions of educational settings that value a broader array of interactions among students, between students and teachers, and between the school and the community. The utility of the descriptions is limited in some respects by an emphasis on independence from (rather than change in) the public education system. The prospects for and limitations on change of the sort suggested here are examined in persuasive detail by John Goodlad (1975) and Seymour Sarason (1971).

3.1.1.3 Opportunities to Promote Change in Values

Because the sorts of values discussed above are pervasive in schooling, there are numerous opportunities to work on redescribing them and realigning the relative emphasis placed on them. At a school system level, the products of curriculum planning and administration -- goals statements, curriculum offerings, accountability plans, and evaluation and testing procedures -- all reflect the relative emphasis placed on various values of schooling, and these come to be communicated either overtly or in practice to instructional staff, students, parents, and citizens. The production of such materials is an opportunity to renegotiate.

Within the latitude provided by a systemwide policy, key agents have options to renegotiate among themselves the emphasis to be placed on various aspects of the curriculum and extracurricular activities, the ways in which the various offerings are named and described, and how the students who participate in them are described.

In a classroom or other activity, a teacher or sponsor can vary the emphasis placed on cooperative work on a joint product versus individual work subject to competitive grading arrangements, and can vary the occupational and practical examples to which units of instruction are applied.

In support services, such as counseling, simple matters such as the mere availability of information and assistance in considering lines of action other than higher education is a very visible statement of the value placed on various interests and aspirations.

In each routine activity of the school, there is an expression of values, and each may be reviewed and redirected along lines suggested above.

3.1.2 School Structure

In the preceding section, we proposed that some of the values characteristic of schools help to generate deviant or delinquent behavior. Such values are reflected in the regulations, policies, and practices by which the school is organized and in the shared expectations among teachers, administrators, students, and parents. In any form of organization there is an implicit set of values, which may or may not be commensurate with public statements of intent. Whatever the set of explicit rationales for individual accomplishment, schools typically are organized to promote (and value) individual competition, to sort students into winners and losers, to value a limited array of activities, and to devalue or ignore other activities and interests.

To seek the prevention of delinquency through changes in the values promoted by the school, then, requires that change be managed at the level of school structure and organization. The object is to search for a form of organization that is accessible to, and supportive of, the largest proportion of students. Several possible lines of reorganization can be described.

3.1.2.1 Changes in the Curriculum

Provide organized educational support for a broader array of work, community involvement, and practical activities.

This line of reorganization follows from the argument for realignment of the values expressed in schooling. The realignments suggested are intended to make it possible for a larger proportion of students to find value and relevance in schooling and to develop a stake in and a commitment to schooling. This realignment of values is made reasonable and real by a corresponding restructuring of the activities providing organized support within the schools. The object is to arrange a curriculum in which the largest proportion of students can participate productively and acquire worthwhile competencies.

A first reaction to the call for different opportunities is likely to be that they will compete for time and resources with existing curriculum elements, that the curriculum options called for will force out important existing courses, that new funds will be required to hire more teachers. That does not appear to be the case. In the options presented below, it is more likely that reading and writing and arithmetic, and civics and history and sociology and biology, will be taught in the course of and as a support for these expanded opportunities and that there will be gains in the attraction and relevance of these studies as a result. Put another way, one can work to show in immediate practice how these studies are valuable to living a life, rather than just claiming that they are. Here are some possibilities.

Increase the involvement of students in work, both as a course of study and as a creditable and credited activity.

A serious study of why people work, how they work, the tools and methods they use, the organizations they work in, their relationships on the job, their job-related associations outside the workplace, and their interest in and satisfaction with what they do is a substantial and valuable curriculum that can incorporate many of the sorts of information, skills, and perspectives addressed in most school curricula. Work as a subject of study does not compete with subjects organized on conventional disciplinary lines; rather, it draws on those disciplines and gives them an object of immediate relevance. Time and resources are not lost;

immediacy, interest, and relevance are gained. Taking advantage of this opportunity, of course, may require rearrangement of instructional materials and methods, and is likely to require the cooperation of teaching staff across conventional disciplinary lines.

In the context of such a curriculum direct involvement in work as an observer, as an intern, or in a job should be a creditable (and credited) activity. The work provides a laboratory, an object of observation and reflection, and a practice field that can be read about, written about, and examined from several points of view, all of which are academically respectable. If the basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating really are basic skills, it ought to become immediately obvious as one works. There is the opportunity to practice a host of equally generic skills, such as learning how to get along with and get around others on the job, learning when one ought to take the initiative, and learning that any existing work probably has a lore that can be learned from those who have done it.

This is not "vocational education" in a traditional sense of teaching specific skills of specific occupations. It is the study and practice of skills and understandings necessary to competent, productive performance in many kinds of work. The recommendation here is not satisfied by conventional "work/study" programs nor by field trips to interesting business establishments.

As an integral part of the curriculum, increase the study of and participation in community affairs.

The arguments to be made here are identical to those made for the study and practice of work above, except that here the point is civic (and civil) education rather than occupational education. Tapping the opportunity to increase the immediacy, interest, and relevance provided by participation in community life again requires drawing on the conventional disciplines to form a curriculum directly supportive of the community involvement, and often requires teaching staff to work with each other across disciplinary lines. Again, it appears that time and resources are not lost, but interest and immediacy are gained.

The possibilities for observation and involvement in communities are numerous, ranging from the operations of city councils to land use management to the provision of social and health services, economic and neighborhood development and improvement, business, the activities of civic and neighborhood organization, elections, and cultural activities from libraries to street theater. Most suggest and establish the immediate relevance of a significant course of study.

As an organized and credited school activity, increase student involvement in service to the community.

One of the particular dilemmas of the student's role is its uselessness. To say that study is the "work" of the student doesn't help. Students may be staying eligible to be useful or helpful to someone in the future, but they are of little use to others now. For some youth, remaining eligible for some long-deferred productivity may be sufficient attraction to invest in schooling. For many others, it appears, there is a need to be useful now. At the same time, there is no shortage of community needs that might be addressed by willing (if inexperienced) hands provided modest support.

> Among many other activities, students have been organized to design and conduct public health information programs, to tutor children, to act as instructors of practical skills for the retarded, to work in hospitals, to support recycling of materials, to rebuild old homes, to assist in urban archaeology, and to visit the elderly. As to the creditability of such activities, it appears that most such activities are natural openings for valid instruction in such areas as health, disease, medicine learning and child-rearing, ecology, social science, and politics. Where 20 or 30 more students can be involved in such service and the persons who would help organize and supervise the service activity can be counted as instructional resources, offering of one or more courses is both possible and feasible.*

Increase instruction for practical competencies of the sort needed to run a household, a small business, or a civic organization.

If reading, writing, and calculating are important subjects of instruction, these practical arenas offer a wide array of opportunities for practice and potential curriculum goes well beyond that. What begins with balancing a checkbook and completing an income tax form extends to reading contracts and shopping for favorable interest rates, and to dealing with banks and loan agencies, the Internal Revenue Service and welfare agencies, to mention only some financial aspects of these enterprises.

The teaching of parenting skills also would constitute a suitable addition to high school curricula. As noted in the review in Chapter 2, teaching parents how to apply social learning theory in the home received highly favorable evaluation; its drawback was the high cost of implementation on a family-by-family basis. The content of that program long has been a part of undergraduate college course work and lends itself well to classroom presentation. Teaching practical applications of social learning theory at the high school level not only would provide another understandable link between school work and everyday life but also would be a way to reap some of the benefit of the recent family intervention programs at considerably less expense. Credited activities in such a course could include monitoring of disciplinary techniques used in homes with younger children.

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*For a description of a complete program involving work and community service, see "Experience-Based Career Education" (Bucknam, 1978) and "Tomorrow's Education: Models for Participation" (Wenk, 1978).

The recommendation here is for instruction and experience that goes well beyond the content of traditional home economic courses.

3.1.2.2 Limits on Changes in Curriculum

These realignments of the curriculum are likely to appear immediately forbidding on at least three counts. To begin, they tend to violate the concept of school as a building, because they imply that more students will be coming and going to and from more places at more different times of the day. Such matters as insurance coverage and school responsibility for knowing where students are clearly entered into this problem.* It must be said, however, that organized programs are being recommended; it is not a matter of pushing or letting the students out the door willy-nilly. In those activities that take students out of the school, it often will be known where and with whom they are, and acceptable norms of responsibility for students can be built around this fact. Moreover, the growing responsibility for managing one's own time, safety, and presentation of self is a central part of the learning that is intended. Some prospect of having students out of the building and on their own as a part of school activities has to be an acceptable and necessary educational risk.

A second barrier to the pursuit of such curriculum extensions may be the problem of finding the members of the community who will help organize, supervise, and instruct students in work involvements, in participation in community affairs, or in community service. Finding persons willing to engage in such a relationahip with schools and students very well may be a problem. However, it appears that the magnitude of the problem often is exaggerated because there is little history of such involvements on any substantial scale or with any regularity. Partnerships of schools with other community organizations to involve youth in the community are likely to be unfamiliar and uncomfortable ventures for all concerned, at first. However, there are enough examples of such partnerships to warrant the prediction that, after the initial discomfort and difficulty and with persistence, the needed community relationships can be established, improved, and made traditional on an expanding scale.

The third main barrier to such curriculum initiatives is likely to be the reorganization of curriculum materials and methods that will be needed. Most of these initiatives tend to reach across traditional disciplinary lines. Most call for adaptation of materials from various disciplines to address the chosen activity or object of study. Again,

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*Several (primarily urban) school districts have incorporated some form of "schools without walls" and have devised solutions to these and other implementation difficulties. See John Bremer and Michael Von Moschzisker (1971).

the magnitude of the task is likely to be exaggerated; what one can accomplish in a first trial is considerably less than one can accomplish over time as a new practice is built up. Whatever materials are used at any given time were developed in just that fashion. It will be necessary to make a start and persist if any similar development of materials for these curriculum options is to occur. Considerable work has been and is being done along these lines in several educational fields, including career and vocational education, social studies, and natural science.

Before leaving this topic, it should be noted again that the intended effect of such extensions and reorganizations of the curriculum is to increase the chances that more students will be able to assign relevance and interest to schooling, to attach value to schooling, and to develop a stake in or commitment to schooling, so as to reduce delinquent behavior. This intened effect is likely to be compromised greatly if these curriculum options are organized as dumping grounds, consolation prizes, or baby-sitting services for students perceived -- and named -- as troublesome, incompetent, or unfit in some other curriculum that is the "real" business of the school. It seems quite possible to so label a program and its participants as to negate the values and opportunities that are intended. These curriculum options should take their places as parts of the standard curriculum recruiting from all segments of the student body.

3.1.2.3 Changes in Classification and Sorting of Students

Examine and work to change ways in which school organization operates on prior school experience to affect bonding, the distribution of opportunity, and labeling.

Here, we recognize that sorting of students is a main outcome of schooling. Sometimes it is intended, sometimes it is not. The ways sorting occurs is an issue both of educational equity and of delinquency prevention.

The general difficulty is that schooling *creates* categories of youth and that the categories in which students find themselves affect their later opportunities in a manner that is independent, to a significant degree, of their interests, capabilities, or performance. Opportunities to realize goals are blocked, grounds for bonding with school personnel are eroded, and alienation from conventional and rewarded school activities is increased, directly contributing to delinquent behavior. Several aspects of schooling are troublesome in this regard.

One is the organization of the curriculum as an inverted pyramid of prerequisites. If a student has trouble at one stage, all subsequent stages are more and more inaccessible. Particularly where course credits and grades rather than specific statements of objective competence are

used to manage the system of prerequisites, there is an increased likelihood that students may be denied opportunities that they have the actual competence to handle.

We understand that prerequisites are justified on the educational grounds that, at one stage, a student may obtain information or learn a skill without which another activity cannot be managed and that establishing prerequisites may help to maintain desired standards of instruction in the courses for which prerequisites are required. With these educational functions in mind, but also in light of the possible consequences for delinquent behavior, two lines of review and action are called for:

- A systematic review of the formal and informal systems of prerequisites, to ensure that only the essential ones are retained. This review should include an attempt to describe prerequisites in terms of specific skills and information rather than as completion of prior courses, because there can be a substantial difference between those two standards.

- A systematic review of the possibilities, within available time and resources, to make units of study maximally accessible, independent of each other. Here, the search would be for such possibilities as taking work out of the usual sequence and providing instructions and diverse instructional materials making a given course of study more accessible to a diverse audience.

A second and highly related aspect of schooling is tracking, where whole sets of courses are designated as distinct curricula, sometimes leading to different high school diplomas. In relation to delinquent behavior, the difficulties with tracking appear to arise from the visible assignment of different values or status to the various tracks, the limitation on opportunities available in a given track, the degree of difficulty in shifting from one track to another or taking some courses in another track, the labels applied to the participants in each track, and the method of assignment to tracks.

Generally, it appears that the contribution to delinquent behavior will be greatest where the tracks are most visibly distinguished and most clearly assigned different value and status, where the opportunities presented by the track are all of the less valued sort, where there is considerable and increasing difficulty of shifting from one track to another or in taking courses in another track, where the participants in a track are visibly regarded as incompetent or unfit or troublesome, and where there is less student choice in the track assignment that is made.

Beyond these indications, or even to verify them, specific cases need to be examined. The strategy for review and action is much the same as for prerequisites. Both the formal description and official practice and the informal description and practice of the tracking need to be examined. The formal name "vocational" on paper may appear a neutrally descriptive term. However, if the informal understanding (which may still be quite visible and consequential in the school) is that the participants in that track are there because they are not thought to be adequate material for a much more highly valued college preparatory track and that the entire array of courses in the track is geared to the "dumbell" level, a different light is placed on the matter.

Again, it is of interest whether the track system is managed according to general criteria, such as the completion of whole courses, or is based in some notion of specific, objective competence. The further the track assignment criteria are removed from understandable estimates of objective competence, the greater the possibility for student alienation on the grounds that the assignment is unfair.

A third problematic form of organization is the practice of using marks of performance in the academic curriculum as criteria of eligibility for participation in other opportunities which the school provides -- sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities. The practice is justified by the argument that a student not doing well in academics should devote more time to them and not be distracted by other activities. The question is whether the intended effect is the actual effect.

An alternate view is that the practice ensures that a student having difficulty showing competence (being a winner) in one arena of school activity will automatically be denied the opportunity to demonstrate competence or to belong in other arenas. The grounds for belonging, for bonding, for commitment to conventional lines of action are systematically reduced. From this alternate standpoint, the result is as likely to be a reduction of investment in the school as an increase in that investment. The alternate strategy suggested is that access to involvement in extracurricular activities will increase investment in schoooling, in activities where significant *persons* -- by informal rather than formal means -- can encourage and support competent performance in the curriculum.

> *Examine and work to change ways in which school organization operates on the race, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity of students to affect bonding with the school, the distribution of opportunity, and labeling.*

The relationships between delinquency and race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are problematic. It appears that the stereotypes of particular racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups as particularly delinquent, or particularly conforming, have been greatly overestimated.

Further, it appears that such relations as there may be among race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are complex and largely mediated by other factors; that is, there are relationships under some conditions but not under others. For example, the overrepresentation of blacks among those arrested may be at least as much a product of selective enforcement as of actual differences in delinquent behavior compared to other groups. Selective enforcement mediates the relationship between race and arrest to a substantial degree.

The concern of this section is with the ways in which school organization may operate on race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status to contribute to, or mediate, delinquent behavior. We will concentrate on largely *un*intended, *un*anticipated, and *un*noticed* effects of stereotyping. These effects should be recognized as reflecting a *structural* problem more than an interactional problem.

We are concerned with the ways in which a presumed relationship between race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status and school performance and delinquent behavior is actually produced in the schools, by way of stereotypes about these groups which affect judgments in daily interaction. Supporting problematic connections of this sort are the arguments, first, that some racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups constitute delinquent subcultures supportive of crime; second, that members of such groups are innately or environmentally rendered less intelligent or skillful, and, third, that some of these groups have different -- it is usually said, "lower" -- educational and occupational aspirations than others. None of these generalizations stand up to the evidence.

While there may be isolated and small populations actively supportive of crime, the more nearly accurate generalization is that crime is disapproved almost universally, both by adults and by youth. Likewise, there is almost universal support for educational and occupational attainment; there are differences in which occupations and educational attainments are of interest and that are thought to be possible.

When we are examining such school patterns as assignment of lower class youth to low-status educational tracks out of proportion to their IQ scores and previous grades (which does occur*), the preceding facts make it more difficult to explain this pattern in terms of lower aspirations and make it more likely that we must examine factors and processes in the school.

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* Overt, intentional discrimination also is clearly relevant here, as are the more covert forms of intentional bias. These appropriately are the subject of civil rights actions and are directly relevant to delinquency.

*See Polk and Schafer, 1972; Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963; and Rosenbaum, 1976.

It appears that a large component of such processes is a reaction of school personnel to the style of some youth -- their manner of speaking, dressing, interacting with friends and with school personnel -- all of which may have little bearing on their objective capabilities, objective performance, or objective degree of involvement in delinquent behavior, but all of which appear to affect the subjective judgments of school personnel both about school performance and about possible involvement in delinquent behavior.

Options for reorganization are tied to examination of unintended discrimination reflected in formal rules and policies and in informal but habitual practice:

- Examination of rules governing student behavior and interaction with adults may reveal ways in which the school is regulating a style of behavior that has no intrinsic bearing on educational achievement or social order and that penalizes disproportionately one group of students.

- Examination of discipline records may reveal the way in which teachers' expectations for appropriate conduct result in more severe sanctions against the routine interactional styles of certain groups.

- Examining the composition of classes, tracks, extracurricular activities, honor societies, and the like may reveal the operation of assumptions and practices tied to class or race that are prescribed by formal policy but unintentionally continued through routine practices of counseling, recruitment, establishment of eligibility requirements, contacts with parents, and so forth.

The general problem raised in the two change proposals discussed above is the tendency to link each school opportunity with many other opportunities that the school provides.* For some students, this means that the entire range of possibilities is open. For others, it means that difficulties in one area, even a narrow area, systematically will be compounded and accumulated in other areas, often independent of the

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*Comparable discussions of sorting and classification and implications for change are pursued by Ianni, 1978; Rosenbaum, 1976; and Polk and Schafer, 1972.

student's objective prospects in these other areas. The system increasingly is closed, diminishing the possibilities for conventional, productive activity, reducing the stake in schooling, and increasing the probability of delinquent behavior.

3.1.2.4 Changes in Governance and the Organization of Influence

Expand the opportunities for student, parent, and teacher participation in the governance and operation of the school.

This recommendation stems from several sources in the delinquency literature. One is that differences between school personnel and groups of parents in expectations about such matters as style (as discussed above) will produce conflicts either in the school or at home. Broader involvement of parents presents the opportunity to negotiate a more consistent set of expectations. A similar argument may be made for the negotiation of values that are to be emphasized. Finally, such involvements of students expand the grounds for participation, commitment to, and belonging in the school, particularly with respect to the important matters of exerting a modicum of influence. Here are some possible lines of work:

- Include students, wherever possible, in the planning and decision making for schools. This often is taken to mean (and often described as a threat) that a student should be elected to the school board, but the possibilities are much broader than that. More modest enterprises are including students in a committee to prepare rules of conduct in the school, consulting with students about some of the topics and issues to be considered in a class and asking them to plan some of the units of instruction, and delegating to students decisions about the use of school funds that support clubs and activities. All these and more have been done in schools with favorable results.

- Seek ways to make parents visible and welcome members of the school.* Occasional

*For additional suggestions on the role of parents and other citizens in improving schools, see the publications of the Institute for Responsive Education, 704 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215. For suggestions on student participation, see Resources for Youth, the newsletter of the National Commission on Resources for Youth, 36 West 44th Street, New York, New York 10036

and often tangential participation on committees or task forces will not have the same effect that tutoring, volunteering in the library or classrooms, operating a crafts room, and similar activities will have. In light of the prevalence of homes with single parents or two working parents, one way to facilitate parental involvement is through more flexible scheduling of school activities.

- Involve students and parents, wherever possible, in instructional and other activities -- as tutors, aides, materials developers, sponsors, instructors, and team leaders -- emphasizing opportunities for students to be useful to each other and to adults, and for adults and students to work cooperatively in practical production. Besides benefiting youth, this kind of involvement can be of immediate help to schools in augmenting their existing resources.

An important part of broadening participation in decisionmaking may be arranging regular, real, and consequential avenues for the expression of both complaints about, and suggestions for the operation of the school, and in organizing students and adults in acting on those complaints and suggestions. The alternative appears to be illegitimate expression of discontent, such as vandalism.

Ensure that the system of discipline -- and is perceived by students, parents, and school personnel -- as legitimate, fair, consistent, and clear (National Institute of Education, 1977).

It appears that a substantial source of alientation of students from the school is the perception that discipline rules and procedures are unfair and arbitrary and that the application -- particularly the differential application -- of vague or shifting expectations for conduct is an active source of conflict. To the degree that the school is, in other respects, a place that provides a stake in conventional law-abiding action, a legitimate and fair system of discipline ought to be effective.

The review of school conduct rules and discipline procedures might start with the question of whether such rules and procedures are legitimate in the eyes of students, school employees, and relevant others. The legitimacy of the rules appears to flow from the case that they are necessary to attaining legitimate educational goals and social order. To the

degree that the system of rules is overextended to encompass -- or impose -- such matters as personal tastes or styles that have little if any consequence for the central purposes of the school, they are likely to be perceived as illegitimate and arbitrary. The ability of the entire system of rules to influence student behavior will be diminished.

It appears that establishing the necessity or legitimacy of the system of rules eases the other parts of the task. Where a solid case can be made that a rule is necessary,* it ought to be easier to express the rule and its justification more clearly and to determine the appropriate procedures to be followed and the sanctions to be applied. The widely shared sense that sactions are appropriate and proportional to the nature and seriousness of the offense probably is central to the perceived legitimacy of the system.

3.1.2.5 Summary

Several preceding subsections have explored the structure of the school and suggested directions for reorganizations that should have a favorable effect on delinquent behavior.

The structural "targets" of change that were discussed are not independent of each other; changing one raises implications for the status of others. For example, control over access to curriculum options (through prerequisites), control over entry into other arenas of school participation (through grade-point averages), and control over transition to future opportunities in school and work (through tracking) are all bound up with each other and are all bound up with principles and practices of competition.

All our suggestions recognize that, at present, schools are the main context in which youth can "develop a bond to conventional lines of action that are relevant to adult roles;" that is to say, to productive, useful, and responsible roles. All of our recommendations are to increase the grounds for attachment and commitment to conventional lines of action that the school can provide and to minimize those arrangements that limit those grounds, diminish attachment and commitment, increase student alienation, and thereby contribute to delinquency. All recommendations concentrated on structure, on standing opportunities, rules and expectations that bear on these matters. The next issue concerns the interactions that occur within those arrangements.

3.1.3 Social Interaction

The social structure of the school is interpreted to the members by the members through social interaction. In this interaction, the

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*A persuasive case is made by Glasser, 1969; Maynard, 1978; and Howard, 1978.

adult personnel do most of the talking and interpreting for the students. The students do not do much talking and interpreting for the adult school personnel, but they do so for each other. To examine social interaction, then, is to examine the social processes by which the social structure of the school operates and is made real for the members. In this case, the question is, What is made real for the students? Several courses of review and action can be suggested.

3.1.3.1 Negative Labeling

Avoid processes in which unfavorable assessments of acts systematically become negative assessments of persons and, thereby, cause those persons to define themselves negatively.

Cumulative processes such as grading appear to present this difficulty. There is no fresh start, no clean slate. The past comes to determine the future, independent of the actual behavior or characteristics of the student. The behavior of the student comes to conform to the label and make the label come true, when in fact there had been many occasions to produce a different, more favorable outcome.

In part, this labeling problem can be seen as a structural problem. When a fairly small number of competencies is valued and rewarded, there are correspondingly fewer opportunities to demonstrate competence. When the competencies are very much alike, there is a higher probability that a person who has trouble demonstrating competence with one will have trouble demonstrating competence with the others. The individual performances are more likely to define the whole person. By broadening the range of values and the opportunities to pursue those values, as has been argued above, there is a higher probability that a given person will be able to display competence at something. Further, it is less likely that difficulties in any one area will come to define the whole person.

In part, this labeling problem is a dilemma of the objective and subjective components of grades. From one perspective, information such as grades is viewed as a measure of performance on specific tasks and as a useful indicator that helps other teachers to assess prospects and to design the right instruction for the student in subsequent specific tasks. If it worked this way, an educational purpose would be served. From another perspective, however, it can be noted that grades often are subjective, generally unrelated to any specific performance of a known task, and apply to a person as a whole. So the meaning "Johnny got a D in history" comes to mean "Johnny is a D student," as though "D" had some absolute meaning. This meaning comes to define Johnny's performance and opportunities, independent of his actual behavior.

The route out of this dilemma may be to attach evaluation of performance very closely to a specific known task. This implies both improving the measure of the actual performance and referring to that measure

only in relation to that task and not in relation to any other task. This would tend to remove the absurdity in which a student who successfully completes 90 percent of the tasks in a course is graded as a success, but a student who has completed 60 percent of the tasks is called a failure, as though nothing had been accomplished.

Where evaluation can be attached to understandable, objective competence, the need for subjective, general comparisons is reduced. Similarly, it is less necessary, in awarding and recording credit, to award and record discredit. (If the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts operated like the schools, scouts would be required to wear *de*merit badges as well as merit badges -- and one might speculate on the effect of such a policy on membership.)

In the absence of clear measures of competence, comparative evaluation processes will produce winners and losers independent of the actual competence attained. In a system attached to definable competence, credit can be awarded when the competence is attained. Not attaining the competence at a given time need not be the occasion for discredit, but for another try. Such an approach does not require that standards be lowered; if no work is done, no credit is awarded.

There is a considerable body of education work, in "competency-based" instruction, individualized instruction, and "mastery learning" (Bloom, 1976) that makes such evaluation feasible and educationally desirable. The relevance of evaluation practices to delinquency makes the broader implementation of the options more important.

One more step might be taken to mitigate the labeling effects associated with measurement of performance and subsequent distribution of opportunity. This is to shift the locus of decisionmaking from adult personnel to students. It seems to be the pattern that adult school personnel inform students of the implications of their grades and steer them to the "appropriate" courses and activities. That is, the students tend to be sorted by the adult school personnel. It may be suggested that -- equipped with specific knowledge of various opportunities and of the tasks and competencies involved, and with specific, objective, and understandable measures of their performance on specific tasks and with their own knowledge of the effort they put into those tasks -- students could make their own decisions and sort themselves. The labeling problem would be reduced.

A third step would be to organize opportunities to use feedback on specific tasks to try those tasks again. In the same way that grades come to define performance in whole courses and come to define persons, the opportunities for repeated trails are organized in sections that are too large. It is ironic that successful completion of 60 percent of the tasks of a course can be defined as failure. It is even more ironic

that the student may be made to take the whole course again to get another shot at 40 percent of the tasks. And, to do so, the student must spend a good deal of time being defined as a failure.

The educational logic and education options in all this have been the subject of substantial work. It is clear that expansion of such systems of evaluation and instruction will present considerable difficulties. However, as has been suggested several times, what may be accomplished in a first trial is substantially less than is feasible as a practice built up over time.

The previous discussion points to the labeling implications of formal grading and evaluation practices. A second cumulative system implicated in labeling includes the files *and conversations* that are related to measures of performance in the curriculum but that concentrate more on conduct, "adjustment," and disciplinary actions. In these files and in conversations, such as in teachers' lounges, reports of conduct are accumulated and merged with reports of academic performance. The cumulative effect is to generate a general, all encompassing label, which may be favorable or unfavorable. Where it is unfavorable, it can have substantial consequences both for academic success and for delinquency.

The implicit assumption of this system of files and conversations is that intellectual and social competence and conduct are innate, that they are merely discovered through time; one builds up files to complete and justify the picture. It will be necessary to recognize that both intellectual and social competence are produced through interaction and activity, much of which takes place in the schools. On this score, school personnel cannot have it both ways. To take some credit for producing favorable social and intellectual performances, one must take some responsibility for producing unfavorable social and intellectual performances.

By generating encompassing negative labels, the system of files and conversations being discussed here actively contributes to the production of performance in accordance with the label and, thereby, is an active contributor to delinquency.

Review and action to limit these effects must take into account necessary and desirable educational purposes of this system. A system that can create a pervasive label also contains the possibility of providing coordinated action of genuine assistance to students. Possibilities for reform include: Limiting the entries to files and conversations to specific observations (rather than more general evaluations) that have a specific prospect of eliciting a helpful response; purging the files regularly to increase the possibility that the student can make a fresh start; and working with school personnel to increase their sensitivity to, and sense of responsibility for, the potentially negative effects of the cumulative record.

3.1.3.2 Isolation

Avoid processes in which single characteristics or limited sets of characteristics of students come to define them wholly.

The characteristic itself may be neither a good nor a bad thing (just a fact), but the social reaction can become a good or bad thing with corresponding consequences. A very visible example of this argument is racial discrimination. Just as poignant is the school reaction to perceived difficulties with learning, such as organic learning disabilities might produce. A typical response may be to put such children perceived to be alike in the same place, so that they can receive the same instruction, which has been developed particularly for them and their problems. It is expected that in this way, for example, their reading ability will improve.

The social implications for delinquency are different. In placing these students together, the students have also been placed *apart* from others in the school. They are perceived as different, and this difference is not favorable or even neutral -- it is negative. The students are perceived as different and are treated as differnent. The difference, which is but one of their aspects, comes to define them greatly and comes to be a main element of their social identify and self-image. The effect is to diminish their opportunities in, their stake in, and their bond to the schools. The probability of delinquency is increased.

The appropriate response from the standpoint of delinquency prevention is to restructure the situation so that such students are not isolated and to work to retain a broader set of interactions with many others, so that *one* common characteristic does not come to define them wholly. They can be seen and can operate as whole persons in many favorable ways that offset the troubles they may have with some learning. It may be suggested that creating such a setting does not prohibit designing and applying special resources for special problems. Instead, it may be suggested, a social setting in which these students can interact with others on a range of matters (rather than just their learning problems) will be more supportive than any special setting and will make it possible to tap resources, particularly other students, greater than any one teacher can provide.

3.1.3.3 Systems of Feedback

Balance the proportion of negative and positive feedback towards the positive side.

The preceding discussions have an example in which a student would be given negative feedback -- and a negative record -- on a whole course as

a result of his or her failure on 40 percent of the tasks, receiving little if any reward for the 60 percent of successes. Such an arrangement is imbalanced greatly towards the negative. Breaking down the work into smaller units redresses that imbalance, increasing the prospect that the student can receive more positive responses to school performance -- with corresponding implications for labeling, self-image, commitment to schooling, and the probability of delinquency.

A systematic approach to this issue would examine the variety of systems of feedback in a school. Some are associated with performance on class tasks, but there are other systems dealing with such things as general conduct. Each system of feedback can be examined to determine whether the day-to-day interactions involved are more likely to operate when disapproval is to be conveyed or when approval is to be conveyed.

3.1.4 Summary

Together, the values, structures, and interactions of schooling can be seen as presenting a pattern of reinforcements and a set of models for students. The question is, What *kinds* of reinforcements and models? What is learned by the students?

The point of the earlier discussions is that -- for a significant body of students -- the values emphasized, the social structure, and the social interactions of schools compose a pattern of reinforcements by which these students learn that what they care about is not valued, that they (and those they come to associate with) are not expected to do much of worth and are not going to go very far and, when they get there, it will not amount to much. They learn that there is not much for them in schools. Their stake in, and possibilities for, conventional and productive action are eroded; their risk of delinquency is increased. They learn that, if they are to get what is valued, they may have to violate the rules, and they learn that there are others like them who will support them in that approach.

The intent of the recommendations made is to change that pattern of reinforcements. Values are to be realigned and differently emphasized so that more youth can make a connection of importance and relevance to the schools. The structures of the school are to be rearranged so that more students can demonstrate competence and learn that they are competent and can belong. Greater participation of the school in the community and of the community in the school makes available a greater array of attractive models to emulate. Rearrangement of evaluation procedures such as grading increases the probability of social rewards for performance and increases the probability that a commitment and attachment to schooling and to conventional kinds of behavior will be learned.

The outcomes of such changes in schools should include more effective socialization to conventional behavior, increased commitment to schooling and conventional behavior, improved self-concept and internal controls, reduced alienation, and a reduction in delinquent behavior.

3.2 Options for Organizational Changes in Work and Community Service

From the standpoint of delinquency prevention, work is a possible setting for socialization and bonding. Work provides opportunities to be useful, to be competent, to belong, and to have power, at least of the purchasing sort. The fewer and more limited the opportunities to work, the more limited the possibilities for commitment to action along conventional lines, and the greater the prospect of delinquent behavior. So the *availability* of work for youth is relevant to delinquency. In this, persons interested in delinquency prevention have allies and should seize every opportunity to work with them.

However, the provision of work opportunities has not proved to be a sure-fire antidote for delinquency. On evaluations available to date, it is clear that simply involving youth in any time-consuming activity called "work" will have no reliable, appreciable effect on delinquent behavior. In at least one delinquency prevention program based on employment, rates of delinquency *increased* over the course of the program (Jeffrey and Jeffrey, 1969). In other studies of employment and delinquency prevention, attempts have been made to discover why some employment favorably affects delinquency and other employment does not. The general conclusion seems to be, in the words of one of the evaluations:

> ". . . employment by itself does not seem to serve as a deterrent to crime if this employment has no meaning, no status, and no opportunities for learning and personal growth." (Shore and Massimo, 1969, p 773).

An employment program is more likely to influence delinquent behavior when it has some bearing on future employment opportunities.

Recognition that the *quality* of work situations is relevant to delinquency often has led to attempted definitions of "meaningful" work. We propose that such discussions, especially when held exclusively by adults, are fruitless. The assumption that there is something intrinsic about *some* work that makes it more or less meaningful than other work at best operates only to make crude and extreme distinctions, and at worst underestimates or ignores a variety of influences that determine a young person's outlook on particular work. Particularly in a world in which young people are known principally as students and generally are marginal to the work world, the nature of the job and its "inherent" value may be of less importance than the way that work is viewed by the

worker's friends, families, or teachers, or the way that the immediate situation is constructed. For example, pushing a broom generally is deemed by adults to be less rewarding and exciting than assisting in a laboratory. The degree to which that view is realistic may depend on the way young people are treated around laboratories or about broom closets, on the contacts with adults and peers on and off the job.

One route out of the endless "meaningful work" discussion is to include youth in the discussion, design, and pursuit of job development possibilities. Few adults have the luxury of holding down jobs that can be described as mostly "meaningful," "satisfying," or "fun." Neither the comments heard from young persons in several meetings attended by the authors of this volume nor the theoretical work reviewed leads to demands for youth employment that is more luxurious than most adult employment. Work that is tedious, tiring, and perceived as a "grind" still can mitigate delinquent behavior, provided that it meets the criteria described in this section.

Our interest in the availability (quantity) and quality of work for young persons comes at a time when both are viewed as problems for adults, so that the interests of youth in work are seen by some as competitive with the interests of adults. Substantial economic and social policy questions of national scope are raised, many of them relevant to delinquency prevention.*

In keeping with the approach of this volume, this section concentrates on more modest initiatives that might be attempted in the present context and at the local level. We make two assumptions: First, within present economic conditions and policy, significant latitude remains to increase and improve work opportunities as tools of delinquency prevention; second, within that latitude, work at the local level to refine employment-based approaches to delinquency prevention will inform policy at other levels.

Opportunities for community service should be considered along with job opportunities. Community service offers possibilities for being visibly useful to others, for belonging as a member of a fruitful and engaging enterprise, for exerting some direct (if modest) influence on one's surroundings, and for gaining and applying skills. All of these elements are central to the difference between activities that influence delinquency and those that do not.

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*See Arthur Pearl's essay, "Employment Dilemmas of Youth," in The Value of Youth, 1978.

In keeping with the preference stated earlier to employ existing resources and activities, this chapter is aimed at options for reducing delinquency by means of organizational change, rather than by the creation of new programs. In an earlier section, school-based supports for work and community service were discussed, and the need for improved and expanded relationships between the schools and other organizations to support such involvement was suggested. Here, the focus is on those other organizations that do or could involve youth in work and community service: Employment agencies, employer organizations, and service and civic organizations.

The objective is both to refine existing employment and services opportunities, and to expand the involvement of youth into work and service activities where now they seldom may be engaged. The list of specific possibilities depends on the locale. In any locale, some adults already are engaged in useful activity in which, by way of some feasible reorganization, youth can be engaged as contributors. For youth already engaged, their possibilities for contributing to, and deriving a stake in, the activity can be increased.

3.2.1 Expanding the Opportunities

We want to add to the present range of work and service opportunities. Here, the objective may be to discover the practical limits within some neighborhood or community for involving youth in work and service, and then to stretch that limit.

Where the youth -- as well as their potential partners, coworkers, and supervisors -- all may be uncertain of the feasibility or even the desirability of the venture, the involvement of inexperienced young persons can present a number of thorny problems. What will the youth do and how will they learn to do it? What safeguards will minimize the harmful consequences of improper performance? Who will supervise and be responsible? What assurance can be given to those who fear that "kids will screw up, not show on time, and leave us holding the bag?" What is going to get done that would make the task worthwhile? Moreover, there may be insurance, child labor laws, questions of responsibility for the safety of the young persons involved, etc., etc.

None of these practical problems is likely to be resolved neatly with universal satisfaction. (One might say that the very difficulty and unfamiliarity of the attempt, the very absence of comfortable routines for bringing young persons into adult pursuits, is a measure of the disorganization of the paths to adulthood and, therefore, a reason to make the effort.) At the same time, we trust that persons know their organizations and will be creative in overcoming or avoiding constraints if they can see some *feasible* approach and a reasonable chance of some moderate *benefit* to themselves, their organization, or their community.

Perceiving the benefit may be difficult, given the indirectness of the impact which can be expected. A store manager who goes to the trouble to make room for a youth receives no guarantee that the store's windows will not be broken or that the store will not be robbed. The manager may be subject to the complaint, by the owner or the home office, that more experienced help who was more productive for the store could have been found. With or without such problems, visible progress in knowledge and growth of competence is likely to be less than dramatic. Similar pictures could be painted of the difficulties faced by persons involved in employment agencies and in service and civic organizations. Relationships between work or service opportunities and delinquency are difficult to see. Isolated efforts promise only modest gains on the personal level and may strike observers as insignificant in the face of the total problem. In these circumstances, it will be difficult to engage persons in the effort or to justify it.

This description suggests at least two possibilities for beginning and strengthening initiatives to involve youth in work and services. First, an attempt should be made to base such initiatives in associations that might provide the members with a sense of participation in a broader, more powerful venture. If persuading individual members of business or employment agencies or civic or service organizations to involve individual youth will be difficult, it appears it will be even more difficult to form among them any association from scratch.

A way around this obstacle is to base youth involvement initiatives in existing, durable associations, ranging from churches to neighborhood development associations to merchants' organizations. To be sure, one will not have their undivided attention in the matter of involving youth in work and service. On the other hand, they offer the prospect of a shared and more durable set of agreements and efforts. Consistent work with such associations can lead over time to a broader appreciation of relationships between delinquency and opportunities for work and service. The members of the association can support each other in the face of their difficulties with youth involvement. The association as a whole can exert more influence on other organizations in the community. The sense of the futility of individual efforts in the face of a large problem can be reduced.

So, one would start the effort with existing associations willing to devote a part of their energies to involving youth in work and service. Some early and visible examples of success will be helpful in gradually increasing the amount of collective energy devoted to expanding the effort. This is in contrast to attempts to locate isolated opportunities for youth involvement and to place individual youth. These attempts carry the risk that the individaul successes one obtains never will become visible enough to build broader support. Moreover, the time and energy needed to find and keep the placements will practically preclude serious efforts to engage associations.

A related possibility is that we can become more skillful at arranging for and recognizing the modest gains made on an individual level, and that we will be more willing to assign significant value to them. There is a natural tendency to compare the experienced worker with the beginner, the new volunteer with the accomplished one. Standards for good work clearly are necessary for any organization. As a day-to-day guide for interaction with the novice, however, the comparison is likely to be unsatisfying and unhelpful, because it conceals or devalues the many small steps in which one works up to an accomplished performance. Noticing and valuing these steps not only can help the young worker perceive a stake in the work but can provide the employer with feedback needed to make training and supervising more effective.

All of this suggests the needs to: Support supervisors and sponsors in the attempt, beginning before youth actually arrive; consciously and overtly identify those small steps; anticipate how they can be made visible for the supervisor, coworkers, and the youth; anticipate how youth can be trained in day-to-day interaction; and reward them systematically. Observations by someone not routinely involved with the activity could help to bring those small steps and unnoticed expectations to light. Here again, the notion of working through an association becomes relevant, because some common understanding of the difficulty can be built up, and the members can support one another in the effort. The intended outcome is that the modest gains that are possible will be attributed more value both by the youth and by the adults with whom they are involved. Approaches made to associations and to individuals that might support youth involvement should contain a specific discussion of these matters.

We have offered two related forms of initiative in the arena of work and community service: Working through established associations to generate a set of opportunities for young people; and working with organizations to enhance support for individual placements, including more realistic assessment of accomplishments. Both approaches are aimed at increasing the prospects that personal, organizational, and community benefit will be perceived in the effort to engage youth in work and service and thereby increase persons' willingness to participate in this kind of venture.

3.2.2 Organizing Work and Service Situations for Youth

Are such aims practical and manageable in the real world of organizations and work? The extent to which the initiatives we have outlined can accomplish these aims is tied to judgements of feasibility. Earlier, an array of specific problems that might be associated with engaging youth in some existing activity was mentioned. In a variety of ways, the youth newly arrived at an activity does not "just fit right in."

The standard response to this problem is to provide briefings and trainings to the youth to make him or her fit better. Where this helps the youth to anticipate the specific expectations for performance, it appears such preparation can be quite useful, if limited. There are no molds by which full-blown members can just be stamped out and inserted right into an existing organization. One becomes a member (good worker, good volunteer) by way of interaction *with* the existing members of an organization, *in* the activities of the organization.

This observation suggests another line of work that probably will be needed to involve youth. From one standpoint, the difficulties of engaging a youth in an activity can be seen as the unpreparedness of youth. From another standpoint, the difficulties can be seen as the lack of routines for helping youth to be members. One observation that can be made about almost any organization is that most persons who are not members join and routinely become members in a relatively predictable, familiar, and comfortable way. It appears that, in many cases, there are not equivalent routines for incorporating and employing youth as members.* Certainly, young people are not the only people coming new to an organization, faced with the problem of fitting in. Adults too seek new jobs and similarly are confronted with understanding and participating in the tasks, understandings, and routines that mark the new job. Yet the dilemma for young workers rests on two grounds that typically do not apply to other, older workers.

First, there is a set of difficulties that young people encounter simply because they are young; these difficulties are bound up in the work and have real consequences for what it takes to be "one of us" on the job. The line between a member (coworker) and stranger (that kid) will be marked only in part on demonstrated ability to do the assigned tasks; it will be marked further by other kinds of participation from which youth generally are excluded. Coworkers may, for example, adjourn to the local tavern for lunch or for a beer on Friday afternoons; coworkers may be heavily involved in the activities or disputes of a union; coworkers may share discussion of their marriages or the trails and tribulations of raising children. There are a number of places to go, things to do, and

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*The problems encountered or envisioned by organizations in trying to anticipate places for young workers are similar to the problems they encounter and envision in trying to use volunteers. The use of volunteers is most successful where they are treated as (expected and helped to act as) "real" workers, where some careful thought is given to the role that they are to perform and where routines are organized specifically to support the volunteer activity. Volunteers are least useful where they are viewed as occasional (and marginal) appendages to the organization, and where the "real" workers feel that it is at least as easy to do the work themselves.

topics to talk about from which young people -- because they are young -- are excluded. These places, activities, and topics comprise territory that is not and could not conceivably be recognized in job descriptions but that is very much a part of the criteria for who belongs and who does not.* Some of this territory can be expanded, restricted, or modified to accommodate young persons.

Second, there are difficulties that are engendered by inexperience in the role of worker. In addition to being new to particular demands of an organization, young people are likely to be unfamiliar with what it means generally to "go to work." Through experience in one or more work situations, adults (even adults new to a job) typically share and take for granted a host of understandings about what going to work means. These are understandings about punctuality, dress, style or interaction with employers and coworkers, legitimate topics of talk on the job, pace of work, and taking, being given, or assigning responsibility, as well as others. In this area anyone who has worked before is likely to have the advantage over someone who has never worked.

On both of these grounds (age and inexperience), young workers can expect to have some difficulty fitting into a work situation populated almost entirely be experienced adult workers. The assistance they receive in navigating the formal and informal requirements of that setting can spell the difference between being seen as competent, incompetent, thoughtful or thoughtless, rude or polite, lazy or hard-working, enthusiastic or boisterous.

Put another way, involving youth in work and service requires not only some preparation for youth but also efforts to prepare organizations. Prior skills, training, and job orientation can accommodate some of the more formal and overt requirements of the job. The more informal and less overt requirements of being a coworker can only be managed by a deliberate attempt to notice those requirements and to arrange activities to accommodate young people. Clearly, an entire work situation cannot be restructured to meet the requirements of a small number of young people. Nonetheless, the more feasible and more deliberate the reorganizations, the greater the use should be of the talents and energies of young workers, and the greater the prospects for increasing the quantity and variety of work and service opportunities.

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*In a similar example, women lawyers at a conference in Denver several years ago complained that they continued to feel like outsiders in the law firms that had hired them because the discussions central to the development of cases frequently were held in the men's room or in the locker room of a local racquet club.

The exact alterations of organizational routine that might be helpful and feasible in any given case depend on the specific characteristics of the case: The kind of organization; the work done or service provided; the numbers of persons involved; the apparent interests and skills of the youth to be engaged; the degree and character of support for youth involvement and perceptions of the involved youth among other persons in the organization; and so on. Likewise, the feasibility of altering organizational routines will depend on matters specific to the case. Changes cannot be anticipated here in the kind of detail that would be required for each of a variety of settings. (The very diversity of work situations precludes a prior suggestion for reorganization of the sort suggested for schools.)

However, one may be able to construct a widely applicable strategy for, first, supporting members of organizations to examine and alter their routines so as to involve youth and second, suggesting the kinds of organizational routines that should be attended to. Working through associations may provide general support and the opportunity to discuss common difficulties and methods. Direct assistance to individual organizations, on site or in seminars, could support review and renegotiation of organizational routines. Persons paid to support youth employment might provide this service. Persons with similar organizations might find time to help one another with the review. One organization, as a specialized project, might train itself to provide such assistance to other organizations.

To address questions of the quality of work and service activities, one may take a list of the values or characteristics of work thought to bear particularly on delinquent behavior and prepare a guide to the analysis of work and service routines. For example, from preceding discussions, take the position that the bearing of work or service on delinquent behavior particularly involves: (a) The objective and perceived usefulness of the activity to others; (b) the objective and perceived competence displayed in the activity and the immediacy of recognition for modest gains in competence; (c) the opportunities to belong, to participate in the personal interaction that occurs both as a part of the work and as a part of the informal socializing that takes place in the organization; (d) the relevance of the activity to the immediate interest of the youth; and (e) the bearing of this work on future opportunities to work, or to serve, in the sense that involvement in this activity carries a promise to open up other opportunities. The task will be to see how various organizational routines might involve each of these five considerations.

This is not a proposal for investing extraordinary, esoteric, or fancy "slots" for youth involvement. The few especially attractive, interesting, relevant, and systematically rewarded opportunities for youth involvement may make the possibilities to influence delinquent behavior more visible, but it is unlikely that such special efforts can

or will be implemented on the scale needed for delinquency prevention. Rather, the object here is to discover whether, by a more refined and pointed analysis of the social characteristics of work and service, we can make modest and worthwhile gains in many organizations. By and large, people of all ages make do with work and with service activities that present a mixed bag of reward and dissatisfactions. Even where the social or material compensation is small, the status low, and the interest limited, persons are able to point to specific ways in which the activity is useful to others, can be done well, and provides opportunities for interest and association. From this point of view, it appears that modest gains in numerous activities would be worth the effort.

The five characteristics of work listed above could be used to examine, in some detail, the routines and the expectations associated with a work or service activity. One might begin with the "background" expectations that are so routine they tend to go unnoticed and uncultivated but that could be a persistent source of perceived failure on the part of the youth. One important expectation is that one will appear at an appointed time or place in a costume appropriate (or at least unremarkable) in the situation, using language and a tone of voice appropriate (or at least unremarkable) in that situation.

While this expectation has been the subject of coaching in many youth employment efforts, other equally important expectations have seldom been topics of deliberate instruction. For example, the members of an organization share certain information with each other that they should not share with nonmembers. In the back of the clearning plant, the staff may joke about finding Mr. G's suits under a pile of dirty towels, but the story won't be funny when related to Mr. G over the counter up front. Because such expectations are so basic, they are also less visible and less subject to instruction. For the same reasons, they are most likely to trip the inexperienced.

Old hands either already know, or get the drift quickly, so that a larger variety of activities is more accessible to them. One of the main marks of belonging -- of being a member -- is the knowledge of these background expectations. Increasing access for novices might be arranged by identifying some of the basic and important background expectations in an activity and exposing them to view and instruction. Otherwise, they are likely to be a source of unpredictable and misunderstood failure.

To support a variety of organizations in reviewing and altering their routines so as to involve youth more satisfactorily, one can identify a set of characteristics that make an activity more feasible for youth and more influential on delinquency, and use it to examine and modify organizational routines and expectations. Background expectations associated with coming to *belong* as a member or coworker were discussed by

example. Perception by a worker and others that an activity is *useful* frequently requires knowing the relationships among tasks; a task with little apparent productivity makes more sense when one understands how the products of that task are used in another to produce an outcome that is visibly useful.

With respect to the competence displayed in the activity, one might work to identify more clearly the smaller elements of competence that make up the task, so that they can be instructed, learned, and rewarded in smaller stages. The possibilities are extensive. The point of the analysis, and of providing support to organizations in such review and rearrangement, is to give organizations more specific control over factors that will affect the feasibility and benefit of involving youth in work and service.

Approaches to increasing the quantity and variety of work and service opportunities and to making improvements in the quality of work and service activities have been suggested. One of the more important outstanding questions is the routines by which youth gain access to such activities. And the pathways of access will have to be *routines*, if work and service opportunities are to be employed on the scale needed in delinquency prevention.

Again, persons interested in delinquency prevention have allies in the goal of expanding work and service opportunities. Employment services have machinery for matching youth and jobs; they may appreciate assistance in increasing their outreach and accessibility to both employers and to youth, and in strengthening their job development activities. Schools may have activities offices or student volunteer offices or departments that could become part of a system through which youth routinely are recruited and gain access to a variety of activities. Such opportunities for building on existing efforts should be seized. The size of the job requires the cooperation of all potential allies; activities called "delinquency prevention" projects cannot hope to mount efforts by themselves.

While working with others to expand work and services opportunities can greatly expand the energy and resources available for the job, it also raises some problems. These tend to be associated with the differences of purpose that different persons and organizations bring to the venture. An existing youth employment program may confine its efforts largely or entirely to a given income group.

Given the problematic relation between income and delinquency discussed on several occasions in this volume, individual income appears to be a poor criterion from a delinquency prevention standpoint. It may provide little focus on youth at risk, on one hand, and may exclude highly relevant groups, defined on some other criteria, on the other.

Given its difficulties just placing youth in jobs, an employment agency may have little attention and few resources to devote to questions of quality of the sort mentioned above. Further, the prospect of being known in a community both as a "low-income" program and as a "delinquency" program might not be attractive to the employment agency. And there are negative labeling possibilities associated with the program's image.

On the other hand, the school activities office may have the policy of recruiting students according to academic eligibility criteria, thus excluding relevant populations and possibly giving the activities program an image that would make it unpersuasive, as a recruiter, with many other students.

Finally, youth with the least prior opportunity, the least bonding with (and commitment to) conventional lines of action, and the greatest alienation from those conventional activities may be the youth least likely to see work and service as realistic or attractive prospects for them. Depending on the method of recruitment, they might not even believe that they were being invited, particularly if they were unaccustomed to being invited to participate in anything worthwhile. And, they might be perceived, by potential employers and sponsors, as the youth most difficult to involve with any benefit. (The word "might" is used here because there is substantial evidence that, if persons don't know the circumstances, labels, and histories of a group of youth, they often will be unable to detect the supposedly risky ones and will be given little reason to be concerned about that in any case.)

In the face of these often complex difficulties, one may be inclined to abandon the effort. The other possibility is to attempt to discover the grounds on which this mish-mash of activities could fit together better -- and work better -- than it does and, at the same time, offer some leverage on delinquent behavior. One may decide not to mount an internal "job bank" activity but to arrange with the employment service to support and use its job bank, thus freeing resources that could be devoted to recruiting employment and service sponsors to increase availability of anything called a job. This may present the opportunity to work on questions of job quality with those same employers and sponsors; employment agency staff may welcome such activity as a needed supplement to their own efforts. The trade-off may be more willingness from the employment agency to entertain eligibility criteria other than income.

On the other side, it may be possible to arrange a broadening of eligibility through the school activity office and to provide assistance both in arranging service sponsors and activities and in arranging persuasive methods of recruitment for more alienated youth. Finally, there is the possibility of more effective links and joint efforts between the school services office and the employment agency.

We recognize here that such initiatives have been tried before and are difficult. The point has been to present the trade-off, for persons who have interests in -- and time resources to devote to -- delinquency prevention. One may attempt to generate a work and service opportunity program expressly for delinquency prevention. There may be some advantages in the ease with which such a self-contained effort could be started on some limited scale, but there is no prospect that the venture ever could attain the scale needed for delinquency prevention. The same energy and those resources instead could go into the immediately more complex and difficult business of strengthening existing efforts. This approach calls for applying one's efforts selectively to the points of greatest apparent leverage for constructing a work/service opportunity system on a more promising scale. Moreover, it requires focusing on those aspects of the system that bear most directly on delinquent behavior: Eligibility criteria and recruiting patterns, and the quality of the work and service activities.

We recognize that the latter approach raises intricate problems of tactics for organizational and interorganizational relations and change. Those are discussed in Chapter 5.

3.2.3 Summary

Delinquency prevention calls for increased opportunities to form attachments to conventional and productive lines of action relevant to adult roles. Work and community service are two main contexts in which such opportunities can be arranged. Persons whose objective is delinquency prevention share with others an interest in expanding the quantity and variety of work and service opportunities for youth. At the same time, the objective of reducing delinquent behavior requires attention to specific qualities of work and service and to the specific character of processes such as recruitment. The qualities and characteristics needed to make work and service influence delinquent behavior are unlikely to be competitive with, or contradictory to, other interests in increasing work and service opportunities for youth. Rather, they are likely to be highly complementary with those other interests. In any case, they must be addressed if work and service opportunity is to be a reliable mechanism for delinquency prevention.

Persons interested in employing work and service opportunities to reduce delinquent behavior have a choice. They can apply their time and resources to creating an independent, self-contained program of work and service specifically designed for delinquency prevention. Such a program may be relatively easy to put in place, but is highly unlikely ever to attain the scale needed in delinquency prevention. The other possibility is to apply one's attention and resources selectively in efforts most likely to contribute to the establishment of substantial systems of work

and service opportunity for youth, and to work within that emerging system to refine its bearing on delinquent behavior. By virtue of its contribution to the general expansion of work and service opportunities for youth, and because it offers the possibility of implementation on a scale needed for delinquency prevention, the latter approach should be preferred in every case where it is at all feasible.

4. DELINQUENCY PREVENTION IN SELF-CONTAINED PROGRAMS FOR SELECTED POPULATIONS

The second principal type of delinquency prevention project to be considered here is the relatively self-contained program of limited scale, directly involving a selected population of youth. As strategies for delinquency prevention, self-contained programs have two main virtues: First, they can be stepping stones to organizational change of the sort described in Chapter 3; second, they can provide immediate benefits to the youth involved in them. These benefits are in the form of increased access and legitimacy (to be described shortly) and pathways for positive -- rather than negative -- labeling. Neither virtue will be realized without deliberate action to make the self-contained programs substantially different from most direct service efforts of the past. The primary purpose of this chapter is to convey the nature of the deliberate action required.

Some persons involved in delinquency prevention are not in a position to undertake direct initiatives towards organizational change. Sometimes this may be a self-imposed limitation as much as a lack of opportunity. However, in many cases, one's position, resources, and situation may not support direct or immediate efforts towards organizational reform. Moreover, the type of financial support available for delinquency prevention programs -- short-term grants or allocations -- sometimes does not favor initiatives towards selective organizational change. Again, this does not seem always to be a matter of necessity; it appears that there are frequent opportunities to use short-term allocations in practical support of organizational reform.

Nevertheless, persons operating delinquency prevention programs often have little choice but to arrange new self-contained programs expected to show definite short-term results with a distinct and limited population of youth. This chapter suggests how some such programs can apply well-supported delinquency theories in a manner that contributes to organizational reform over a longer term.

The similarity of the suggested programs to many existing programs is both a source of optimism and a potential source of difficulty. On one hand, the similarity may indicate the feasibility of the programs suggested. On the other hand, the similarity may make it more difficult to isolate important differences between the suggested programs and familiar programs, and may increase the risk that the programs proposed in this section will be transformed, by habit, into something quite different from what was intended.

An Ohio State University study found a class of delinquency prevention programs that illustrated this kind of transformation. The explicit, stated rationales and goals of these programs called for action to alter the social environment of the youth in the program; the activities concentrated almost exclusively on the youth themselves, revealing an implicit working assumption that the difficulty and the solution rested in the individual youth and not in their environment.

Programs based in employment opportunities exemplify the dilemma. It has been noted before that employment programs, as such, have not been shown to be reliably effective in reducing delinquency behavior. The task then is to search for those specific characteristics that distinguish the effective ones from the ineffective ones. Here, emphasis will be placed most heavily on the preparation of the work *situation* in which youth will be placed; employment programs to date have concentrated more on attempts to prepare the *youth* who will be placed. It is not clear that efforts to prepare work situations present more problems than efforts to prepare youth; it is more likely that they present different problems, calling for tactics that may be unfamiliar. Under the pressures of implementation, it will be understandable if program staff who set out to prepare situations resort to more familiar tactics and end up preparing youth. This sort of redirection by habit may account in large part for the Ohio State University findings. The lesson may be that it is necessary to *overemphasize* distinguishing characteristics of intended programs, both in the design and in the implementation, to realize them as intended.

There is a tendency to handle direct service delinquency prevention programs as though they provided some sort of inoculation, as though youth "processed" through the program somehow had been immune to delinquency for the rest of their lives or at least the rest of their youth. The clear operating assumption is that delinquency is a personal characteristic that can be fixed, for good and for all. In light of contemporary theory and research, this is not a realistic expectation.

The programs we recommend here reflect the position that delinquent behavior usually arises out of social situations that are capable of generating delinquent behavior in most or all youth at any time. These programs are aimed at producing situations that are conducive to law-abiding behavior or less likely to generate delinquent behavior, and that can be expected to persist beyond the youth's involvement with a given project. Moreover, the intent will be to use the short-term, self-contained programs of limited scale to discover how to create situations in which processes contributing to delinquency can be altered, and then to use those discoveries to create such situations on an expanding scale.

For the present, then, there are two projected uses for the short-term, self-contained programs of limited scale. One is to create situations in which delinquent behavior is reduced, so that the principles and methods can be applied on the scale needed for delinquency prevention. The other is to provide preventive short circuiting of existing delinquency-producing processes for youth ensnared in them.

The settings for these programs are the same as for the selective organizational change programs: School, work and community service, and their interactions with families. Most of the principles and possibilities are identical. The general form of the program is to attempt to create, for a selected population of youth, a social situation likely in itself to limit engagement in delinquent behavior likely to affect in a similar manner other situations in which the service population is involved, and likely to overcome past experience that may have contributed to delinquent behavior.

4.1 Common Grounds of Direct Service Programs

The common base of these programs is a specifically *augmented*, conventional opportunity in school, work or community service. On this base, the object is to arrange a set of expectations and activities likely to have for participants the following effects: (a) Increased opportunities for commitment and bonding to appealing and conventional lines of action; (b) improved correspondence between aspirations and the means of achieving them; (c) increased interactions with groups supporting law-abiding behavior; and (d) the reduction of negative labeling, or relabeling in a favorable direction.

The important points of this goal set or rationale are largely captured in the notion of *legitimacy:* The chance to be useful, to be competent, to belong, to be interested, and to exert influence in an activity, and to be recognized as such by others (Polk, 1971). In these terms, delinquency prevention means supporting and allowing youth to be legitimate.

Legitimacy is not something to be announced, but is something that must be discovered. It is not something which can be proclaimed unilaterally, but something that must be agreed to. In practice, one has to negotiate what legitimacy amounts to. If some activity is intended to allow and support youth in being useful, in displaying competence, in belonging, and the like it must be so perceived by several relevant parties. The immediately relevant perceptions are those of the youth to be involved in the activity and of the adults who support, supervise, and participate with them in that activity. Also relevant are perceptions of youth not involved in the program and of adults with whom the program's participants must deal in other settings. To confer a general legitimacy to the program's participants, the basic

activity must be perceived as legitimate in the broader circle of significant others.*

What makes an activity visibly legitimate? As mentioned, this must be negotiated with the relevant parties in the situation. Here are some characteristics that frequently may be relevant. The activity is *intrinsically interesting* and worthwhile, not just as a step to something else, not solely by comparison with something else, but in and of itself. It is *useful* to persons other than the youth and adults immediately involved in the program; that is, it produces some thing or service that is useful to others. It clearly requires and supports the acquisition of specific, understandable *competencies* and growth of those competencies. It provides opportunities to *belong*, to be a member, to take a part, to contribute, and to *influence* the direction the activity takes.

These programs usually will be based in schools, in work, and in community service. By virtue of the value already widely attributed to them, activities with the required characteristics may be generated most readily in these settings. Recreation might be used as a base in the same way, but the possibilities for declaring usefulness to others, which is a critical characteristic, appear limited in this setting (with the exception of involving youth as the organizers, instructors, or coaches of recreation for others, where the values involved are more similar to those of work or service).

For school-based programs, several possibilities were suggested or implied in Chapter 3. These included: (a) Developing and implementing curriculum options specifically organized to cultivate practical competencies in running a household, a small business, or a civic organization and involving youth in work and community affairs, as a base for organizing and applying skills, concepts, and information from several academic disciplines; (b) broadening the array of valued and credited activities in school; and (c) engaging students in the governance and operation of the school. The volume New Roles For Youth (NCRY, 1974), for example, presents an array of case studies of specific activities in which students have been engaged and that appear to supply the needed characteristics of legitimacy. Students have been organized to develop curriculum materials for each other, to serve as tutors;** and to provide public health education programs throughout a community.

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*It probably will not be feasible to enter into negotiations with all potentially relevant other -- persons, groups or organizations -- when designing and initiating a program. For example, a program that engages young people in the contruction or restoration of buildings may not start off by negotiating the grounds of the program with all of the neighbors and local merchants. The likely responses of those groups nevertheless can be taken into account so that, over time, the effects are as intended.

**See also Gartner, Kohler, and Riessman, 1971.

Other teams have produced oral histories of ethnic neighborhoods and records of traditional crafts, undertaken archeological digs, renovated run-down houses, and studied opportunities to increase youth employment in public transportation.* The teams generally operate on a consensual basis to plan a course of action, with the teaching staff serving as advisors and informants. Such enterprises appear to be rich in the grounds for legitimacy mentioned above.

Arranging work activities with the needed characteristics presents a set of problems different from those involved in arranging activities in schools, but the possible range of work activities probably is equally broad. Some programs might be based on placing youth in currently available jobs that are enriched along the lines discussed in Chapter 3. Others might employ youth in emerging or economically marginal pursuits, perhaps recycling materials and restoring dilapidated housing, where the perceived utility might be high but, under existing conditions, the activity produced little or no full-time employment. Here the additional attraction for youth might be the perception that they are conducting a demonstration or contributing to a movement, such as the attempt to restore inner cities without displacing the poor.** Others might employ youth in the provision of human services. Publicly subsidized employment for youth might be instrumental in the latter areas.

In regard to community service, some options already have been illustrated in the school and work possibilities. New Roles For Youth (NCRY, 1974) describes a variety of other possibilities, ranging from the preservation of prehistorical and historical artifacts and records to the training of tenants on their rights to the operation of service programs for other youth.

In most places, some or many youth already may be engaged in such school, work, and service activities. However, the size of such programs often is insufficient for regular use, by even small delinquency prevention programs. Such activities may not be accessible to populations of most concern from a delinquency prevention standpoint. Finally, existing school, work, and service activities might not be designed for the greater impact on delinquent behavior. The situation suggests that delinquency prevention programs should be organized within existing schools, employment programs, and service programs;

*See also Wigginton, ed., Foxfire (1, 2, 3, and 4).

**In an agreement signed in 1978 between the Denver Public Schools and Historic Denver, Incorporated, an arrangement was made for students to work in crews of nine under the joint supervision of a certified teacher and a contractor to remodel old houses for sale to low-income families. The students receive minimum wage pay and academic credit for their part-time work.

they should be designed to expand and augment the available opportunities and increase their bearing on delinquent behavior. Rather than organizing on some other base and then trying to get a share, on a case-by-case basis, of scarce work opportunities available through an employment program, it would be preferable to place the delinquency prevention project *in* the employment program, designing it to expand available work opportunities, upgrade their quality, and increase their accessibility to relevant populations.

Moreover, the situation calls for an active search for additional options. For example, although it is probable that youth are assisting the retarded in some communities, the authors thought it a fresh option when a high school sophomore in their employ found work and service opportunities in a half-way house. By the account of the staff of this community-based half-way house, the movement to bring the retarded out of institutions and into communities requires extensive and time-consuming instruction in a host of very practical skills, from making change to finding the bus stop and getting the right bus to go to work at a sheltered workshop to finding the supermarket to operating an unfamiliar stove. The half-way house staff showed the authors extensive lists of very specific skills, all of which could be learned by their clients, given time and *instruction*, which always is in short supply. The situation seemed well suited to the involvement of some youth. The case also suggests two other principles: That opportunities for youth work and service are likely to be found in problems and needs of others, and that the first place to involve youth in work and service is in the delinquency prevention program itself.

The persistent refrain of these programs is that they regard the young participants not as problems but as resources, not as clients or recipients but as participants, not just as receivers but also as givers. One of the stronger themes of these programs is that shared expectations tend to produce the behavior expected. The basic and persistent expectation in these programs must be that the participating youth have something to offer and will perform productively with appropriate support and organization. For such programs to have durable effects, these views and expectations must extend beyond the confines of the program itself; the support offered by program staff will be of limited effect* if the program and its participants (including staff) are held in contempt by teachers, employers, other young people, and neighbors.

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*Elliott, Blanchard and Dunford (1976) report findings from an evaluation of a short-term diversion project that suggest that the short-term effects of participating in traditional treatment programs are ambiguous in the first place, and that even positive gains (including the ever-popular self-esteem) typically are lost in a short period of time after participation in the program ends. Such programs have appeared to have little influence in settings beyond the program itself.

In an Idaho school, Kenneth Polk described a drug education team formed to develop and present a drug education program to sixth-grade classes in the district. The team was made up of a diverse group of high school students, including both those with high grades, conventional behavior, and no history of drug use and those with low grades, unconventional behavior, and a history of drug use. Under typical expectations for a classroom, the latter group would not have been expected to do well. When the task was to prepare and present a well-informed, credible, and persuasive drug education program -- and under the clearly expressed expectation that all members of the team would have something to contribute -- members of the latter group often emerged as leaders and primary contributors (Polk, 1975). It appears that choosing a useful task to perform and holding to the expectation that every person can make a useful contribution to the product are crucial to altering the situation and increasing opportunities for more persons to display usefulness and competence in a greater variety of ways.

4.2 Description Of The Program

Given that the intended base of the program is an activity perceived as legitimate in several relevant quarters, the public description of the program is important. Publicizing the purpose of "delinquency prevention" will not be helpful. The fact that a reduction in delinquent behavior is intended will have to appear in some administrative documents and routines and, at various points, has to be taken specifically into account in designing and operating the program. A few persons will have to talk about the program as a delinquency prevention program. None of this appears to require that the program be described, for the larger audience relevant to the effects of the program, as a delinquency prevention program.

The program should be described in terms of the legitimacy that is sought. "This is a program to involve youth in studying and helping their own community. It provides opportunities to be useful to the community . . . ." For almost all practical purposes, such positive descriptions will suffice and will be most desirable. There may be occasions when the program will have to be described as a delinquency prevention program to justify it. Often these occasions will be so far removed from the location of the program as to present no difficulty. Where the justification has to be provided close to home (e.g., at a school board hearing for a school-based program), the presentation might be arranged so it moves from a recognition of a problem to the proposed response described in terms of its positive merits. "This community is deeply concerned with violence, vandalism, and disruption in schools. After careful review of the options, it appears we should increase the opportunities for students to become involved in, and to develop a stake in, conventional activities in the school...." Various

parts of this paper provide examples of the language that might be used.

Other than such potentially difficult situations, the program's operators should be able, with persistent attention, to define the program in terms of its intended legitimacy for all relevant audiences. For the youth participants, for their adult partners, sponsors, and supervisors, for parents, and for many others who are watching, the program is an opportunity for an interesting and highly relevant class, for a chance to work, or for the satisfaction of helping another. Preserving this description will depend greatly, of course, on other features of the program's operations.

4.3 Specific Design Of The Activity

Negotiating a legitimate activity that is perceived and described as such among the relevant audiences and building a strongly shared expectation that the young participants have something to offer and will perform competently and productively under the right conditions go a long way towards establishing the desired program. The next task is to make those perceptions, descriptions, and expectations *real*, in the daily interactions and routines of the program.

The intended effect of these programs comes from the routine interactions of their participants and from participants' interaction with others outside the program.* In school-based programs, this means interactions with the students and teachers in the program, with other students and teachers in the school, and with parents. In work and service-based programs, there are interactions with the other youth and adults in a service team, with coworkers and supervisors, with teachers and others back at school, with parents, and with persons at large, including neighbors. In a student-run corporation at Manual High School in Denver, students' interactions with others extended to bank officers, contractors, and union officials.

The specific design of the program involves the arrangement of these routines to realize the legitimate expectations of the activity and, thereby, to affect bonding, socialization, association, labeling, and delinquent behavior.

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*In an article on community-based programs that have had broader applicability to prevention initiatives, Robert Coates (1977) argues that the effectiveness of the program depends critically on the nature and extent of links established with the real world of education, work, service, neighborhood, etc. in the community.

A number of issues relevant to the specific design of the program were given in Chapter 3. The approach is similar except that, in many of these self-contained and new programs, there will be greater opportunities to design the activity from the ground up rather than having to modify a standing activity.

In Chapter 3, for example, the effects of instructional methods were considered in connection with testing and grading practices. A problem raised was that, if the evaluation of classroom performance is based on comparison of students with each other and is not clearly tied to specific, understandable competencies, the activity is likely to produce labeled losers, regardless of actual performance. Moreover, the students will have few opportunities to be rewarded for small gains in competence or to use understandable evaluative feedback to improve their performance. The suggested modification was increased use of available "competency based," "individualized instruction," and "mastery learning" techniques.

Another issue raised was the balance between opportunities for cooperative work on a common project and individual work subject to comparative evaluations and competition, where the problematic effects again are the generation of losers and the reduction of the range of opportunities to demonstrate competence and utility.

The specific design of a school-based program, then, might include a deliberate mix of group projects, which should be completed to receive credit but which are not subject to comparative evaluation, with individual instruction in some "competency based" mode. A problem that will arise is how to square the evaluation and grading practices of the program with the grading practices of the whole school. (That there is no simple solution for the problem indicates some of the limitations of self-contained programs.) When persons anticipate such problems, they are displaying their intimate knowledge of pervasive organizational arrangements; however, closer attention (and sustained intent to make things better) can lead persons to explore possibilities for other arrangements.

As one step in an extensive effort to improve educational quality and school climate at Cleveland High School in Seattle, students and teachers organized a system by which teachers could choose from among four distinct arrangements for evaluating student progress and assigning grades. The options offer a combination of traditional grades, pass/no credit, or mastery checklists; no failure grades are assigned, and students who did not complete work simply do not receive credit. The Cleveland High School experience calls into question the need for uniform administrative procedure across an entire school. Moreover, it illustrates the way persons' knowledge of organizational structures and operations can be used to inform the business of change, rather than to inventory reasons why nothing can be done.

For work- and service-based programs as well, issues and approaches were suggested in Chapter 3 on selective organizational change, both for increasing the quantity and variety of work and service opportunities and for improving their quality. Again, the specific design of the activity will require systematic, detailed attention to shared expectations that govern the activity but often are not recognized* and to daily routines that can affect the perceived legitimacy of the activity and of the youth engaged in it.

These comments have been directed to the specific design of the school, work, or service activity in which these delinquency prevention programs are based. The argument is that the activity itself has the main bearing on delinquent behavior, will be the most difficult part of the design, and should receive the lion's share of attention. Support activities, such as job coaching and tutoring, will be taken up in a following section.

4.4 Mixing The Participants

If an activity involves only youth described as delinquent, truant, incompetent, troublesome, or the like, the activity is likely to come to be known as dealing with "that element." There is a distinct possibility that the program will not provide opportunities to attain legitimacy but simply will further negatively label the youth who are involved at any given time.

To avoid such problems, these programs must serve a mixture of youth of all descriptions such that, as a group, they will be perceived as a usual or normal group and the legitimacy of the program will be preserved. There is no magic in constituting this mix. An appropriately conservative, if arbitrary, rule -- given the inevitable pressure to fill the program with troublesome youth -- is to ensure that youth carrying some kind of negative label constitute no more than half the participants. The mixing of the participants confirms the positive description of the program and requires the specific design to maximize individual opportunity.

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*The difficulty persons have in giving careful attention to these expectations, (i.e., in adopting an organizational rather than individual view of the situation) and the difficulty persons experience in suspending loyalty to a set of practices without abandoning loyalty to the organization or the job are described in revealing and helpful detail by Sarason (1971) and Goodlad (1975).

This requirement of mixing the participants might introduce some difficulties in justifying the program. If the program serves all youth, what makes it a delinquency prevention program rather than a general youth development program? What justifies particular effort or an allocation in the name of delinquency prevention? Three responses might be given. First, delinquent behavior is not confined to a small distinct population but occurs among all segments of the youth population. Many of the conditions and processes that generate delinquent behavior can affect all or almost all youth. Thus, a program that deals with a mix of youth of all sorts can be justified as a delinquency prevention program, *if* it pays specific attention to creating conditions and processes in which the probability of delinquent behavior is reduced. This argument goes back to the comparison of delinquency prevention with public health; one works in the general population to remove specific contributors to the problem. In this case, one works to create situations in which many of those contributors are removed or reversed. Even where a general population is served, there can be focused work on the factors demonstrably (empirically) most involved in the generation of delinquent behavior; this activity is specifically preventive in character and can be justified as such.

A second response is that the programs being recommended here usually will be joint ventures between persons and organizations with responsibilities and resources for delinquency prevention and with those having other responsibilities and resources for youth. In a school-based program, for example, the schools can put up students, teachers, facilities, and money in their usual proportions on the grounds that educational opportunity will be expanded, if not on the grounds that school violence and vandalism will be reduced. An allocation justified as delinquency prevention need support only the reorganizations, augmentations, and refinements that may be required. That is, in a joint program, delinquency prevention resources are needed only in some rough proportion to the total effort.

A third possible response is that there may be ways, within the mixed population, to increase the leverage on delinquency by ensuring the recruitment of a subpopulation of youth more likely, by virtue of their situation, to engage in delinquent behavior. This possibility is considered in the next section.

4.5 Selecting and Recruiting Participants

In these programs, the selection and recruitment of the participants are not neutral or ancillary functions but are critical parts of the program. The selection and recruitment procedure either confirms and supports the intended image, intent, and effect of the program or detracts from it.

A typical way to obtain participants for delinquency prevention programs includes some kind of diagnosis or identification of individual young persons as troublesome or potentially troublesome, followed by a referral of those young persons to the program. Such routines involve several

problems that make them inappropriate for these programs.

To begin with, most of the characteristics that persons are likely to use in attempting to choose individual "predelinquents" have been shown to be of no predictive value. (Historically these have ranged from having a sloping forehead to having a pathological personality to, most recently, having a purported learning disability.) More seriously, the very ritual of predicting, diagnosing, and referring individuals can produce the problems we intend to prevent. The problem is that such predictions can be self-fulfilling prophecies. That is, the prediction has effects in and of itself, is a part of a set of expectations about evaluations of, and reactions to, the young person that are likely to produce the problem predicted.

Finally, the routine of diagnosing or nominating individual youth and referring them to the program cannot be used because it immediately will destroy the intended legitimacy and image of the program. Such diagnosis or referral routines are subject to informal or formal coercion ("if you don't take the program, there will be negative consequences"), which is highly inappropriate as the beginning step to participation in these programs. In any case, the arrival in the program of a group of youth known to have been sent there because they are troublesome is likely to have the immediate effect of negating the agreements about the legitimacy of the activity.

Some other methods of obtaining a service population must be devised. This is probably the case, even where the program is justified in serving a mixed population without making any attempt to recruit high-risk populations. Where a program is described as a conventional opportunity, those youth with the least prior opportunity, the lowest bonding to conventional lines of action and, therefore, the highest probability of delinquent behavior also may be the youth least likely to seek access to the program. To the degree that this is the case, even where the goal is a mixed, ordinary service population, the outcome may be a self-selected population of the youth least likely to become involved in delinquent behavior.

In general, the choice of a method for selecting and obtaining a service population for these programs should consider: (a) The leverage that is gained on delinquent behavior; (b) the contribution of the selection and recruiting method to the effect of the program, through such mechanisms as labeling; and (c) the appropriateness of the selection/recruitment procedure whatever its effect (e.g., race as a selection criterion and the possibility of coercion in the "recruitment" may present problems in this regard).

In general, the recruitment method of these programs will be, first, to identify a service population on the basis of uniform criteria that define common situations, conditions, or processes affecting a *group* of youth and not on the basis of criteria that vary by individual. Second, at

best, these situations, conditions, or processes will themselves be implicated in the generation of delinquency and the criteria well correlated with delinquent behavior. Third, the service population will be obtained by recruitment on the basis of the positive merits of the activity in which the program is based and not as a response to general or individual trouble, actual or anticipated. Fourth, in this recruitment, the youth's participation (formally and informally) will be voluntary.

Existing literature, including this volume, should be consulted in deriving criteria suitable to a given situation and then designing the recruitment procedure. Here, we attempt a couple of examples to illustrate the approach and some problems. It should be recalled that, whatever criteria are used, they are used in conjunction with the preceding requirement that the service population of the program be mixed so as to be perceived as a usual or ordinary population.

Income has been used as a criterion for selection to delinquency prevention programs. On the basis of research evidence and arguments given earlier, it appears to be a poor-to-totally-inadequate criterion for the selection of individual persons, because income is too heavily mediated by other factors that may bear differently in different situations. There is some reason to believe that income might be suitable as *one* of the criteria for choosing a service area or a location, such as a school.

Earlier, we cited a study (Kratcoski and Kratcoski, 1977) that found that rates of delinquent behavior were higher in schools in which large proportions of students were from low-income families; however, in those same schools, income was *not* a predictor of delinquent behavior for individuals. The clear implication is that, in schools serving a low-income population, *all* of the students are more likely to be more delinquent that in other schools. The difference may lie in the schools' reaction to, or interaction with, low-income neighborhoods. The reactions of school personnel to "artifacts of class" among their students may result in reduced opportunities for bonding in the school, devaluation of (or even contempt for) some aspirations of students, and increased instances of alienating conflict, disciplinary actions, and the like. Such a description would support selecting *all* the students in schools serving high proportions of low-income students. This description also might argue for a school-based program.

A similar discussion might be had of choosing neighborhoods where there are high rates of contact with the police. Where the object is prevention (as distinct from diversion, which also might be targeted in such neighborhoods), the reason for choosing such neighborhoods would not be the belief that a high rate of police contact is an accurate measure of high rates delinquent behavior. Selective patrolling and enforcement, as much as delinquent behavior, could account for the official rates. The significance for prevention programs is that there may be, in such neighborhoods, high

rates of visible and alienating conflicts with police, with effects washing over into the home and into the school in the form of negative labeling and rejection. Again, the target population would be *all* youth in the selected neighborhood (or, some youth in the neighborhood chosen by some criterion other than police contact rate, *if* a suitable recruitment procedure could be arranged).

Selection criteria might define an area or a location such as a school and draw from all of the youth in the area or school. Arranging the desired recruitment method under such circumstances should be relatively easy, compared to programs that might attempt to concentrate on subpopulations within an area or school. As suggested above, the description of the program and the recruitment procedure might produce the selective participation of a subpopulation that is the least likely to engage in delinquent behavior, greatly detracting from the benefit of choosing the area or the location. The design of the recruitment should consider that possibility.

Where one has chosen an area or location and wants to obtain additional leverage on delinquent behavior or wants to offset the possibility of recruiting the youth least likely to be involved in delinquent behavior, or where the selection of an area or location is unsuitable, one may want to ensure that, within the mixed population of the program, subpopulations at highest risk are well represented. The selection criteria and the recruitment may pose more delicate and thorny questions.

With respect to school-based or -connected programs, Elliott and Voss, (1974), for example, indicate that a higher-than-average rate of unexcused absence from school may be a reasonably reliable indicator of a higher-than-ordinary probability of involvement in delinquent behavior. Polk and Schaefer provide evidence for the case that students placed in a lower status academic track in a school are, as a group and as a consequence of such placement, more likely to become involved in delinquent behavior. As reflections of conditions, processess, or situations conducive to delinquency and with established correlations with delinquent behavior, such criteria -- or combinations of them -- might be used to specify a "target population" for recruitment to the program. However, much depends on the method of the recruitment.

In the programs intended here, the members of the target population are not brought in by individual referral procedures for reasons given earlier. Rather, they are brought in by a recruitment based on the positive merits of the program, the credibility of the invitation, and the interests of the young persons involved. Clearly, for a population of youth who may be at odds with or alienated from school, this will not be a simple task. The first step is to have ensured that the activity is genuinely legitimate and attractive and is perceived as such by a variety of students; the basis of the recruitment is specific information about such a program. Then, there

is the question of who can make a credible presentation and invitation to alienated students. Teachers, other school personnel, and students who already have credibility with these students would be natural choices for recruiters.

The procedure, then, would be as follows. To start, the program should include a mix of all sorts of youth, so that the recruitment begins by advertising the program in a conventional way. When the program is intended to be a credited part of the curriculum, a conventional way would be to list the program with other courses and provide information about it at the time students enroll for courses. Some advance publicity probably would help. This conventional procedure should attract a large part of the spectrum of students to be included but may be persuasive with some members of the target population. They are unlikely to feel invited because, if it is good, they often are not invited. Special effort is required expressly to include those youth who traditionally have been excluded from desirable activities.

So, the second part of the recruitment is to let the members of the target population learn about the program and to learn that they indeed are invited. This should be accomplished without any overtones of singling out the troublesome. There will a list of the persons who meet the target population criterion; the existence or use of this list need not be visible. There will be a few recruiters who manage to approach members of the target population in ordinary ways in the course of a day; that they are deliberately seeking out the members of a given population need not be announced.

This procedure is intended to engage vulnerable young persons and, at the same time, to avoid labeling the program or the youth in it. It is also intended to avoid the peculiarity of giving these youth something good because they have been or may be troublesome. Members of the target population recruited in this fashion apply for the program the same way everybody else does. If there are too many applicants, a lottery will preserve the mix fairly and in a way that avoids odd standards of deserving.

The success in recruiting members of the intended target population can be measured by examining the distribution of the target population criteria (e.g., neighborhood of residence, unexcused absence rate, track position) among those ending up in the program and comparing it with the distribution of these criteria in the school. The degree to which the chosen criteria

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*A similar process will help to detect such unintended consequences as racial or social class isolation.

provide a focus on populations at risk also can be checked if the program is adequately evaluated. A pretest is likely to include self-report delinquency measures and other measures associated with delinquent behavior. The degree to which the recruiting criteria provide representation of populations at greater risk can be checked in the analysis of this first set of measures. In this connection, it should be pointed out that the use of a lottery to choose participants when there are too many applicants not only ensures preservation of the mix of the applicants but also will provide, in most cases, randomly assigned experimental and control groups, permitting the most powerful form of evaluation for the program.

Given the complexities and difficulties bearing on the program's impact and possible negative effects associated with selection and recruitment, it should be clear that the target group criteria should be chosen -- and the recruitment procedure designed and implemented -- with extraordinary care.

It appears that arranging similar selection and recruitment procedures outside the school may be more difficult and highly dependent on the situation. There appear to be few selection criteria equivalent to school track location or rate of unexcused absence from school, and recruitment procedures that do not single out persons on the basis of trouble may be harder to arrange.

Elliott and Voss's findings on dropout and delinquency, for example, make school dropout a highly problematic selection criterion. Their findings indicate that youth who drop out of school show a rapid decline in both self-report delinquency and police contact rates, while persons who continue in school have steadily increasing rates of delinquent behavior and police contact. Their argument is that dropping out resolves the set of conditions that was contributing to delinquent behavior. To concentrate on dropouts for purposes of delinquency prevention, this implies, is to concentrate on a population whose involvement in delinquency will decline rapidly in any case regardless of whether they participate in a program. If a program does select dropouts, it would be desirable to use a control group of other dropouts in the evaluation, to examine this question.

One has to read these findings to be at all satisfied with a conclusion. However, it appears that a concentration on dropouts could be justified as delinquency prevention only for recent dropouts and then only if one took into account, in the program design, the possibility that the program would simply aggravate and extend the conditions that the youth is escaping by dropping out. For example, programs to return dropouts to school would probably run this risk and so might concentrate on alternate routes to educational certification. It appears that a more appropriate and desirable approach, from the standpoints both of delinquency prevention and of educational achievement, would be initiatives in junior high schools. Where dropout rates are high, the option of programs in junior high schools should be considered.

Unemployment probably can be used as a satisfactory selection criterion for programs based elsewhere than the school and would be especially suitable for prevention programs based in work or community services activities. Where the recruitment is based on umemployment rather than suspected involvement in delinquency, recruitment procedures of the kind called for should be possible.

Where suitable selection criteria are difficult to arrange, programs based in activities other than school still could attempt to use the school as the recruiting ground, employing recruitment criteria and procedures already suggested. If this is done, particular care should be taken in the negotiation of the intended effect, image, and procedure of the recruiting. School personnel not thoroughly briefed in and supportive of the strategy of these programs may perceive an invitation to nominate students whom they see as troublesome, and resort to individual identification and referral procedures that specifically are not desired in these programs.

4.6 Work in Groups

It is desirable to have youth working with each other and with adults on the same task. This serves at least three functions. One is to increase the chances for belonging -- for being a member. Another is to increase recognition among adults, as well as other youth. The third is to increase the opportunities for youth and adults to learn from each other and to negotiate shared expectations and goals.

4.7 Support Activities

Given the mixed population involved in these programs and the emphasis on arranging the program to provide maximum opportunities for all participants, no particular need for remedial services or treatments is anticipated. If there is a demonstrable need, it should be met.

The difficulty is that, while many of these services are not defined as serious trouble, neither are they a source of desirable roles and labels. To be known as a client of such services, even when they are needed, may contribute to isolation and labeling.* Care should be taken to regulate

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*MacDonald (1971) reports that, in one program designed to reduce truancy, the single *ineffective* tactic was counseling. At least part of the difficulty was traced to students' reported discomfort in being seen entering the counselor's office.

the effect of such services, both on the image of the program and on the standing of the young persons served. This is not a call for secrecy but for making participation in such services ordinary and of low visibility, so that they are not the sources of isolation and labeling.

In this connection, it appears that there may be a use, in these programs, for a particular form of counseling. Given the general failure of counseling of any kind to demonstrate an effect on delinquent behavior, the inclusion of a counseling component here needs to be justified and, perhaps, even renamed. Let us call it "advice," which is as likely to be given to adults as to youth.* In these programs, there is the attempt to negotiate a set of expectations for a workable activity that broadens opportunities for legitimacy. Some of these expectations will be new for all concerned, adults and youth alike. Some needed or problematic expectations are likely to have been overlooked in the original negotiation. These and other things may be the occasion for apparent problems.

From time to time, it will appear that, for some youth, the program is not working out. One possibility is that this apparent problem does not have anything to do with the program. Another possibility is that the activity has not been arranged so well as it could have been. Another possibility is that the youth involved do not correctly perceive the opportunity or do not know how to take advantage of it. Yet another possibility is that there is some individual physical, mental, or emotional problem with the youth involved, with other youth in the program, or with some adult involved in the program. In their usual activities, some delinquency prevention programs reflect the assumption that such problems always reside in the young persons involved, and there is an immediate resort to some treatment to fix up those young persons.

In a fashion consonant with other elements of their design, the programs described here operate on a different assumption; namely, that a likely source of the difficulty is in the arrangement of the program itself, that some unnoticed barrier or unintended exclusion is the source of problems that are only most visibly manifested in the behavior of individual youth.

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*Some readers will recognize this as a recommendation for one of a variety of activities that have been termed "advocacy." Because of its diversity of meanings, this terminology is avoided. For a discussion of disparate activities called "advocacy," see Hawkins, Pastor, and Morrison, (1979).

Put another way, the assumption is that the most likely source of the problem is in the ways the expectations of several parties, including the youth, have been negotiated (or have not been negotiated, as the case may be).

With this assumption, the first and most frequently used response to apparent problems will be to attempt to adjust the arrangements without defining the situation as substantial or enduring trouble. That is, the primary purpose of the counseling is to gain information that can be used to adjust the situation. Part of this response is likely to be to provide advice and encouragement to the various parties, including the youth involved, in an attempt to ensure that the adjusted situation is perceived correctly by all and that persons know how to make the best of it.

Careful attention needs to be paid to the question of who could give such advice, since it is as likely to be given to adults as to youth. Some of the work that has been done in education, in classroom management consultation, might provide some guidance here. In Colorado, a recently formed League of Cooperating Schools has begun using school principals as consultants. The principals, who work in teams, have had practical experience in the matter of organizational change (specifically, school climate improvement) and have credibility by virtue of their position.

The preceding remarks should not be taken as a claim that, in these programs, all problems will disappear, that grossly unacceptable or dangerous behavior should be tolerated or waved off, or that no participatnt will stand in need of individual attention, sometimes of an intensive or vigorous sort. Such claims are not being made here. Earlier, in a discussion of the difficulties of realizing program designs, we said that it may be necessary to overemphasize the features that distinguish one program from others, to increase the odds that it will be implemented as intended. Here, we have emphasized the need, both in the design and in the implementation, for persistent attention to the arrangement of the *situation* as the first and most important order of business.

4.8 Intended Impact in Other Settings

These delinquency prevention programs should be designed systematically to exploit opportunities to affect their participants' standing in settings other than the program. This is a common objective in delinquency prevention programs. Equally common is the attempt to accomplish it by preparing the participants somehow to deal more effectively with those settings. To improve standing at school, one provides tutoring on the assumption that improved performance will be recognized and rewarded, provides job coaching in relation to work, or provides counseling for dealing with family relations. The difficulty in this approach is its exclusive reliance on the youth's performance or behavior to alter the situation. Tutoring outside the school may produce an increase in a student's skills, but it is questionable whether the

display of the skills upon return to school will alter -- or even be recognized -- in a situation where several teachers -- and other students -- have built up a shared perception of the youth as troublesome and incompetent, are on the lookout for trouble and failure, and share the expectation, often built up over a considerable term, that the youth is a loser.

As ancillary functions, counseling, coaching, and tutoring may be of some practical assistance but cannot be relied on as exclusive or even primary strategies for improving a youth's standing in other settings. Here, we will concentrate on opportunities for exerting a direct influence to alter situations outside the delinquency prevention activity. The strategy is built on the fact that the basic activity of the program has been negotiated so that it is widely perceived as legitimate, useful, productive, and requiring skills. Moreover, the activity has been designed to maximize the chance that each participant will be able to show, and be recognized for, gains in competence and in usefulness to others. That is, if the fundamental approach of these programs works, a considerable amount of specific, understandable good news about the participants is generated.

The strategy is to use this good news systematically to alter the participants' standing in other settings. Good news about performance in a school-based program, transmitted by a credible route, should alter the perceptions and expectations of teachers in other classes in the school. Similarly, good news generated in work and service activities ought to be influential at home or at school, and vice versa. By conveying such news systematically, regularly, and through credible channels, it should be possible to alter perceptions and expections in other situations and, thereby, to alter the opportunities and support present in those situations. It should be possible to use information from the program to relabel program participants favorably in other settings.

This strategy requires specific attention to the sorts of information that can be generated in the program and that will be perceived favorably and found credible, and to the credibility of the messenger. For teachers, the information that a student is a productive team player may be as favorable as the information that a student attends regularly or has shown gains in reading. If the information is to be credible to the teacher, it should be plausible that such information would be generated routinely in the prevention program, and the messenger should be seen as competent to make such judgments.

The same strategy might call for restricting the flow of bad news from the program. Often, news of failure and problems is conveyed from one activity to another, apparently on the grounds that the in-

formation will induce a helpful response from those to whom it is conveyed. Assumptions of help are not necessarily warranted by the consequences. In a study conducted by the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic (Sarason, 1971), researchers investigated the effects on students' grades when teachers sent home "interim" notes warning parents that the student was in danger of receiving a D or an F.

> "It is not violating the canons of reflective thinking to say that the intended outcome was to raise the level of the student's performance by actions that parents would take on the basis of the message from school. That, of course, is what school personnel explicitly expected.
>
> "Our surprise began when our data indicated that receiving interims was by no means infrequent. Forty-seven percent of the boys in one sample, about 49 percent in the other sample, received at least one interim during the four marking periods. For girls in the same samples the figures were 33 and 32 percent, respectively.
>
> "We then asked what happened to the student's grade in the subject in which he had received an interim - did his grade increase, decrease, or remain the same compared to the grade in the previous marking period? Since the previous grade was typically a D or F it was obvious that for many students they had only one direction in which to go, and that was up. What the data clearly revealed was that in half the cases the grade remained the same, in 38 percent the grade went down, and in 12 percent the grade went up. If the intended outcome of this procedure was to raise grades it clearly was not successful. School personnel were unaware of these actual outcomes, and when they were made aware of them they were surprised at the discrepancy between intended and actual outcomes." (Sarason, 1971, p.80)

Even granting that the information may induce a helpful response, one must deal with the distinct possibility that the information simply will add to an established negative label and confirm unfavorable expectations.

The general policy of these programs, then, is likely to be to ensure a systematic flow of credible good news, unless there is a specific reason to believe it does harm, and to suppress bad news,

- unless there is specific reason to believe it will induce a helpful response or unless it will be illegal or unethical to suppress it.

One possible response to this policy is that it invites the abandonment of standards in the name of spreading good news. This is not the case; these pages have shown a consistent preoccupation with detailed analysis of school, work, and service activities to identify the specific, understandable, and objectively discernable skills and information involved. That preoccupation is justified by the position that most of the processes (bonding, labeling, socialization) involved in the generation of delinquent behavior revolve around judgments of legitimacy. The more visible the basis (or lack of basis) for those judgments and the more visible the cumulative effects of those judgments, the better the opportunity to alter processes that generate delinquency.

Detailed descriptions of the performances on which judgments of worth will and should be based serve several functions in delinquency prevention programs. They support the negotiation and description of activities that will be regarded as legitimate. They support the organization of routines to maximize each participant's opportunity. They are the basis for systems of evaluation and of the feedback that, provided to participants', can help them correct or improve their performances without negatively labeling them. If these things are done, they should increase the amount and credibility of the good news that legitimately will be generated. The present point is merely to use that news systematically where it will do the most good.

4.9 Providing Credentials

These delinquency prevention programs should support systematically the acquisition of a variety of kinds of skills and information. The social legitimation or rewards for those attainments should be built into the basic activity. Often, pay will be involved. In addition to these forms of legitimation, these programs should provide credentials -- concrete, portable records of what was achieved -- that may be helpful in opening up opportunities in the future and in other situations.

In many cases where the program is conducted in the schools or in conjunction with schools, credits and diplomas may be generated as a matter of course. Credited instruction can and should support most of the work and service activities arranged. GEDs may be obtained. Participants may gain access to an apprenticeship program that will generate a credential in due course.

However, many of the activities in which youth will be involved, even though they do support worthwhile gains, do not generate such credentials as a matter of course. And, even in activities that do generate credentials over a longer term, it is possible and desirable to generate credentials for steps along the way* or for specific accomplishments that would go unrecognized in a general credential.

In the same way that these programs are intended to broaden the range of opportunities for legitimacy, they should broaden the range of the visible signs of that legitimacy. Some other programs show youth how to prepare resumes and job applications. These programs should give youth something to put in them.

4.10 Contributions To Larger Initiatives

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, a goal of these delinquency prevention programs will be to discover how to create situations in which processes contributing to delinquency can be altered, and then to use those discoveries to create such situations on an expanding scale. The pervasiveness of delinquent behavior requires delinquency prevention initiatives on a large scale unlikely to be attained by largely self-contained programs of short duration. To the degree that they do contribute to the larger initiatives needed, it will be because these smaller (usally grant-based) programs provide principles that can be employed widely and because they play a part in organizational reforms affecting many youth.

Without underestimating the complexities of introducing something new into existing organizational settings, we propose that the chance to contribute to wider application of principles and of supporting organizational reforms will be greatest if delinquency prevention projects are carried out *in* the desired conventional settings -- schools, employment programs, and community service activities -- and with the usual allocations** of staff, youth and resources that typically are available. Otherwise, there is little prospect that what is learned will be seen as realistically applicable in an increasing scale.

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*For example in the Cleveland High School scheme described earlier. students may receive 1/4 credit, 1/2 credit, 3/4 credit, or full credit, depending on the amount of work they manage within particular time periods (Howard, 1978, p 29).

**Reports of fancy, high-money demonstrations tend to gather dust on library shelves.

These programs are designed to affect delinquent behavior by providing augmented, conventional opportunities in school, work, and community service. This suggests that delinquency prevention projects should be located in schools, employment organizations, and service organizations, in the first place. Where combinations of school, work, and service opportunities are intended, and this is a desirable prospect, the project might be placed in another organization if there were some realistic prospect that it could pull off such a partnership. Obtaining the needed agreements is likely to take longer at the beginning of a project, but allies usually can be found in the relevant organizations. If a grant is possible, that may improve the odds.

As a trade-off for possible difficulties, there are substantial possible benefits. Placing the project in a school, in an employment agency, or in a service organization allows persons not directly involved in the project to learn about its principles and pay-offs more easily, sets up favorable comparisons if the program indeed is effective, makes it more difficult for others to call the project staff "them" (and vice versa), makes it easier to get the required mix of youth, makes it easier to convey information designed to relabel youth in other situations, makes the program less visibly separate and, thereby, helps avoid isolation or a spoiled image for the program and for the participants. If a grant should end, the program's staff are not strangers whose departure will not be noticed.

There is the very real possibility that the project will become isolated within its parent organization. This will be likely to negate the intended effects of negotiating the legitimacy of the program and its description, make it harder to obtain a mixed population, and the like. In fact, most of this chapter's prescriptions for delinquency prevention projects were arranged to avoid this sort of isolation. The underlying tactic is to attempt to secure the program characteristics needed for delinquency prevention while defining and organizing the program as an ordinary and desirable part of the organization's activity. This tactic appears essential, both for establishing such programs in standing organizations and for ensuring that they indeed influence delinquent behavior.

Independent delinquency prevention programs -- outside the major arenas of education and work -- are likely to have great difficulties establishing the required activities in the first place and little chance of instigating larger efforts simply by "showing how it's done." The comparison of the potential difficulties and prospective benefits favors establishing delinquency prevention projects in schools, employment agencies, and service organizations (where they are to be engaged as providers of service, not as clients) from the beginning.

The decision to do so carries with it some implications. One is the need to spend considerable time forming the desired partnership. For example, we have suggested that programs of the type described here may be justified in schools on the grounds of their contribution to educational opportunity or to the reduction of violence and vandalism in the school. As the project is to be based in some school activity that is negotiated to be a legitimate, creditable school activity, school personnel should be able to commit their staff, students, and other resources in the usual proportions. That is, the school would be carrying the main expense as an ordinary part of its operations. Clearly, this is not going to happen without considerable negotiation.

The tactics recommended here -- even for self-contained, direct-service programs of limited scale -- raise a variety of questions about intra- and interorganizational relations and the management of change. These are main topics in the next chapter.

4.11 Summary

Some short-term and smaller scale projects working with selected populations of youth can apply leading delinquency theories to delinquency prevention, both to provide a preventive mode of short-circuiting existing delinquency-producing processes for youth ensnared in them and to discover how to create situations in which delinquent behavior is reduced, so the principles and methods involved can be applied on the larger scale needed for delinquency prevention.

The general form of the program is to attempt to create, for a selected population of youth, a social situation likely in itself to limit engagement in delinquent behavior, likely to affect in a complementary manner other situations in which the participants are involved, and likely to overcome past experience that may have contributed to delinquent behavior.

These programs are intended to reduce delinquent behavior by: (a) Increasing opportunities for bonding and commitment to conventional lines of action; (b) reducing strain (or providing greater correspondence) between aspirations and the legitimate means of attaining them; (c) increasing interaction with groups supporting law-abiding behavior; and (d) reducing negative labeling or relabeling participants favorably.

Several principles or strategies for establishing such programs have been suggested:

- Base the program in a specifically augmented, conventional opportunity in school, work, community service, or a combination of these.

Credited instruction will be a desirable component in most cases. It will be necessary to negotiate, among the young participants, the adults who work with them, and others an activity that is perceived widely as legitimate -- useful, calling for competence, interesting, providing opportunities to belong, and providing opportunities to exert influence on the course of the activity -- and, therefore, capable of legitimating its participants.

- Cultivate the powerful and widely shared expectation that the young participants have something to contribute and will perform productively with appropriate support and organization.

- Describe the program not as a delinquency prevention program but in terms of the positive, legitimate merits of the activity in which the program is based.

- Negotiate the basic activity specifically to realize the legitimacy and description of the program through the interactions that occur in the normal course of events. This will require detailed analysis of: The expectations which govern the activity; the specific skills and information required and attainable in the activity; and the probable cumulative effects (e.g., labeling) of interaction about these expectations, skills, and information.

- Serve a mix of youth such that, as a group, the participants will be perceived as an ordinary or usual group of youth, to preserve the legitimacy of the program.

- To obtain leverage on delinquent behavior and to confirm the intended effect of the program, the method of selecting and recruiting the participants should identify a service population on the basis of uniform criteria linked to common situations, conditions, and processes affecting a class of youth. At best, these situations, conditions, and processes will be implicated in the generation of delinquent behavior, and the corresponding criteria will be well correlated with delinquent behavior. The service population should be obtained by recruiting from the selected class of youth on the basis of the legitimate merits of the basic activity and not as a response to trouble, actual or anticipated. In this recruitment, the youth's participation (formally and informally) is voluntary.

Given the complexities and difficulties involved and the centrality of the recruitment procedure to the program, the choice of selection criteria and the design of the recruitment procedure should receive extraordinary care.

- The program should be designed systematically to exploit opportunities to affect participants' standing in other settings by managing the flow of information (good news and bad news) generated in the program to significant parties in those other settings. Identifying the specific merits attainable in the activity, providing for their routine recognition, and choosing a credible way of transmitting the information outside the program all are important to this strategy.

- In addition to the forms of social legitimation and recognition that should be built into the basic activity, these programs should provide credible, portable credentials that may open opportunities in the future and in other settings.

- To increase the chances for belonging, to increase recognition among adults, and to provide increased opportunities for youth and adults to negotiate mutually agreeable and legitimating expectations, the opportunities should be maximized for youth to work with each other and with adults on common tasks.

- Special support services for individual participants may be provided if there is a reason to believe they are needed and will be helpful. Some such services raise problems of isolation and negative labeling, so specific efforts should be made to regulate the effects of such services on the image of the program and on the standing of the young persons served. Provision of such services to presumably troubled or troublesome youth should not be used as a substitute for efforts to ensure that the situation presented to the youth by the activity has been organized appropriately. In this connection, a form of counseling or advice-giving both for youth and for adults connected with the program can be used to gather information useful in rearranging the situation, as needed, and to ensure that the sometimes unfamiliar situation is perceived correctly by all parties and that all parties know how best to take advantage of opportunities presented within it.

- To maximize the chances that they will contribute to wider application of useful principles and strategies and will contribute to desirable organizational change, these delinquency prevention projects should be established from the beginning within schools, employment programs, and community services organizations (where the youth will be involved as providers, not clients). Among other things, this strategy implies the need for early efforts to form the needed partnerships with the sponsoring organizations and for specific attention to the possibility that the delinquency prevention project will become isolated within the sponsoring organization. The tactic for both cases is to attempt to secure the program characteristics needed for delinquency prevention, while defining and organizing the program as an ordinary and desirable part of the sponsoring organization's program.

Clearly, the establishment of such delinquency prevention projects may require organizational change at least of moderate scope in the sponsoring organizations, and may require change in relations among sponsoring organizations. These topics are considered in Chapter 5.

5. SOME IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

A wealth of published general material exists on the topics of planning, management, administration, and conducting negotiations. Good practices in these areas are as important to implementing the approaches described in this volume as they are to implementing any other program. However, the purpose of this chapter is not to summarize the general material. Our intent here is to focus only on points that are peculiar to the recommendations presented in preceding chapters. Thus, the discussion of problems and tactics that follows augments, rather than substitutes for, more standard pointers that are widely available elsewhere.

Preceding chapters have described two main forms of initiatives for delinquency prevention. One calls for direct efforts towards selective organizational change. The other -- calling for establishment of delinquency prevention projects within schools, employment agencies, and community service organizations -- clearly implies significant organizational adaptation. In short, both approaches involve modification of organizational routines. We recognize that the accomplishment of organizational change may appear cumbersome, threatening, diffuse, unrewarding, and generally beyond reach. In the way we view and describe such work here, we attempt to place such accomplishments more within reach, without underestimating the complexities and difficulties that persons can expect to encounter.

First, we recognize that some of the institutional arrangements that will be dealt with are bound up with larger social and economic systems. We argue that, even so, institutional arrangements contributing to delinquency can be identified and modified incrementally to an extent making the venture well worth the effort in terms of reduction of delinquent behavior. It is in this sense that anticipated changes are described as selective.

Second, we have narrowed the field by focusing on opportunities for delinquency prevention by means of specific realignments of some formal organizations, including schools, employment agencies, and employing agencies. Education, for instance, is broader than schooling; it incorporates family activities, recreational activities, and activities in the workplace. While schooling is not independent of external restraints, demands, and expectations, it is a main part of American education, and the public schools, at least, are highly visible entities with clear responsibilities to the public to reorganize, as needed to accomplish social goals. As such, the public schools are an important and appropriate focus for delinquency prevention initiatives.

Third, while recognizing that delinquency is a widespread phenomenon, indicating a social problem of large scale, we do not call

for immediate and massive new expenditures in delinquency prevention. Although the initiatives suggested imply increased expenditures, the long-range preference here is for incremental improvements in the use of the very large expenditures already being made in programs directed to youth. The main opportunity to make progress in delinquency prevention is to improve the use of resources already committed. Towards that end, we have tried to choose options that can be implemented on a gradually expanding scale.

Additional resources should be earmarked for those activities that are least likely to occur without them. Notable among such activities are solid evaluations. A sufficient portion of new funds should provide expressly for implementation of an experimental approach, not in the sense of small-scale "demonstrations" whose primary purpose is discovery of better techniques, but in the sense of building in feedback mechanisms that allow ongoing, informed improvement of the programs described in this volume.

At best, the approaches described in preceding chapters will be implemented as community initiatives accomplished by change in local organizations and their relationships and in an experimental fashion. The job of delinquency prevention exceeds the resources and responsibilities of any single agency or organization. Concerted efforts among groups of organizations will be necessary and desirable. This implies adjustments in the relationships among organizations and the need for interorganizational negotiations of complementary activities. Mounting efforts on the scale required for delinquency prevention will require substantial and widespread community support. Some desirable actions will require change in the shared expectations and perceptions of many persons in communities, since these restrain and direct community organizations that deal with youth. Moreover, the experimentation needed to improve programs inevitably will be done in an environment of diverse perspectives and demands.

These purposes and circumstances imply a set of implementation difficulties and tasks that may differ substantially from those involved in many other programs. Some implementation problems may be unfamiliar, and the specific tactics needed sometimes are relatively undeveloped. The comments in this chapter are intended to aid in anticipating problems and devising ways to overcome them. We present *one* view of how organizational and interorganizational change can and does occur in communities. How organizations change is a complex matter, and present literature provides no easy or straightforward answers. We believe that the view presented here is consonant with much of the present literature on organizational change, and that the processes and tactics suggested by that view are well suited to the initiatives which have been proposed.

The view of organizational change processes we present may have limited applicability to some circumstances. This view presupposes

incremental changes of relatively modest scope and, therefore, might not be best suited to situations where more dramatic purposes are at hand. It presupposes that the question is less one of the array of values to be realized than of *how* those values interact and bear on the situation and how they may be realized in practice; situations where substantial questions of equity are at stake, for example, might require other tactics. The view presupposes sufficient local latitude, within State and national constraints and conditions, to accomplish worthwhile goals. Where those constraints and conditions actually prohibit intended accomplishments, additional tactics may be needed. This view of organizational change at several points suggests the need and opportunity for citizen action, while concentrating on the interactions among and within youth-serving agencies; some delinquency prevention efforts may require a much larger reliance on citizen action. This view focuses on existing organizations and their interactions for purposes of delinquency prevention. In highly disorganized locales providing limited existing organizations to work with, other tactics might be stressed. Even with these possible limitations, we expect this view to be suited to a large proportion of practical cases.

Finally, it should be said that most or all of the issues raised here are complex and present a variety of uncertainties. Each could be discussed at considerable length. What follows, then, can be taken as a set of working notes. We turn first to reasons for the disproportionate attention to remediation that currently characterizes delinquency prevention practice.

5.1 Reasons for Disproportionate Attention to Remediation

While a need for some kinds of institutional change is the most direct implication of prominent delinquency theories, initiatives directed to institutional change for the purpose of reducing delinquency are the option least used in practice. The overwhelming majority of delinquency prevention efforts are relatively self-contained programs of services directed to selected populations of youth who, on some grounds, are thought to be at risk of delinquency. The bulk of these programs are remedial rather than preventive in character. The following paragraphs describe four reasons for this.

5.1.1. Responses to Current Theory

The theoretical arguments and research findings on which the need for institutional change is based may be unfamiliar, ignored, or even rejected among many persons in positions to influence the formation of delinquency prevention efforts. The general operating assumption reflected in most of contemporary delinquency prevention programming appears to be that delinquency resides in individuals as a personal characteristic. Most of the efforts devoted to delinquency prevention

have searched for adjustments in individuals, to the point that individual treatment as a preventive measure has become an institution in itself, largely dominating the field. Under these circumstances, decisionmakers and sponsors seldom are presented with well-conceived options in the mode of institutional change.

5.1.2 Responses to Demands for Change

There is a general tendency to react to change as an evil. Ways of doing things over time come to be invested with value. A proposal for change provokes the response that the way in which a goal presently is pursued is the only way in which it can be pursued. In any case, familiar habits are dear, and modifying them is painful. In such a context, it is difficult to sustain a dispassionate discussion of the possibility that there is more than one way to realize relevant values.

5.1.3 Difficulty or Complexity of the Needed Change

In some respects, institutional changes of even modest scale are more complex and difficult undertakings than organizing service programs with new allocations. At the same time, the magnitude of the difficulty probably has been overplayed as a result of the scarcity of well-conceived efforts. As a result, learning about methods of deliberate and selective change in organizations probably has been slow. This clearly is the case for the development of the practical implications of contemporary delinquency theories. Compared to the expenditure in treatment programs, programs to explore the practical options for reorganization have been minute. As a consequence, even persons sympathetic with organizational change perspectives are unpracticed in translating ideas into action.

In a study of the expressed objectives and activities of staff personnel in delinquency prevention programs, Ohio State University (1975) found a number of delinquency prevention programs in which the staff argued that delinquency was a product of social environments and expressed objectives to alter those environments. Almost uniformly, however, the activities in those projects were directed to the treatment of individual youth. Where delinquency prevention as individual treatment is the norm persons intending or encouraging needed organizational change easily can find themselves, almost by default, taking another course of action entirely. Like teachers and other organizational staff in contact with young persons, practitioners will have limited results, unless the environment in which they must work is addressed as well.

5.1.4 Demands for Immediate and Visible Results

There are repeated, insistent demands for immediate results. These are reflected in the abandonment, reorganization, or reassignment of

responsibilities and programs over periods as short as 2 and 3 years. The appetite for immediate results tends to be stimulated by programs that promise such results, even though most delinquency prevention programs are never evaluated in any rigorous way but merely are repeated over and over again from place to place, leaving the impression of movement and innovation. Such strategies as treatment, enforcement, and rehabilitation may have seemed direct, concrete, and immediate, while efforts towards change have appeared diffuse, indirect, and time-consuming. In such a context, there is little room for serious, persistent cumulative pursuit of well-developed and well-evaluated options. Ironically, a refrain continuing for decades is that there is not enough time to attempt programs aimed at short-term (3 to 10 years) rather than immediate results. What we encounter in practice, then, is a striking imbalance in favor of small-scale, remedial approaches.

5.2 Form of the Initiative

A dominant stereotype in the field of delinquency prevention, particularly in grant-based programs, depicts a self-contained project of staff and facilities dealing directly with a selected population of youth thought on some grounds to be at risk. Designing a program to accomplish selective organizational change requires considering program possibilities that go beyond those implied by the stereotype. The "twelve reasons why it can't be done" almost always are bound up with considerations of change, rather than with considerations of delinquency theory per se. With a recognition of these factors, we will suggest here some main points that accord with a number of observations of organizational change.

5.2.1 Defining the Setting Organizationally Rather than Personally

The first requirement, and in some ways the most difficult to sustain, is to develop an organizational perspective -- a habit of viewing, analyzing, and interpreting situations in terms of their organizational characteristics. For most, this will be an unfamiliar way of thinking. We are accustomed to interpreting situations by judging the motivations, intents, competencies, words, and actions of individuals:

> "In practice, most explicit and implicit conceptions of change derive from the language and vocabulary of an individual psychology that is in no way adequate to changing social settings. The fact that one can be the most knowledgeable and imaginative psychoanalytic, learning, or existentialist theoretician gives one no formal basis for conceptualizing the problem of change in social settings. The problem is simply not one to which these individual theories address themselves." (Sarason, 1971, p 59).

The question then arises of what is "organizational." Some image may be needed to guide action. For present purposes, we will take the simple view that an organization is a set of activities deliberately organized to accomplish some stated purpose. We recognize that the activities called for in the formal description of an organization are not the only activities that occur, and that the outcomes called for in formal goals are not the only outcomes produced.

Long-standing organizational practices are supported by a set of rationales for what is right, proper, and desirable. The rationales justify expectations for certain behaviors within the organization. The rationales do not originate in a vacuum; they frequently reflect wishes not only of those having a direct interest in the organization but of people in the larger community. For example, the expectation that students will be compared with one another with respect to their classroom performance is not unique to school officials and teachers. It is widely shared by parents and other adult members of a community, and by the students as well.

Such expectations are manifest in the day-to-day habits and practices of persons in an organization and are reflected in policies, regulations, and statutes that apply to the organization. This combination of expectations, practices, policies, regulations, and statutes tends to be justified in terms of some relevant expression of values. When pressed, persons can cite a rationale that justifies what they do. In the case of classroom comparisons, such matters as achievement, the value of competition, and the importance of maintaining standards might be cited in justifications. As further justification, one might point to demands from universities, employers, and others to rank students for various purposes.

Organizational change, then, means change in prevalent expectations about the desirability of certain goals or outcomes and the effective and appropriate ways of attaining those outcomes. This, in turn, involves change in the habits, practices, policies, regulations, and statutes in which those expectations are reflected. It is one thing to ask whether the grade assigned to a given student in a given class was fair or accurate. It is quite another to take up the question of the social effects of classroom grading as a common routine.

There is a tendency to reduce organizational questions to personal questions, by concentrating on the personal commitment, competence, good will, or intentions of individuals within an organization. This perspective is relevant but of limited utility when the effects of common routines are at issue. To address organizational questions is to see persons in the context of the expectations that they share and by which they are influenced and constrained.

5.2.2 Anticipating Direct and Indirect Effects of Organizational Change

In efforts towards selective organizational change, the activities in which one engages are intended directly to alter some feature or process of an organization and, thereby, indirectly to affect delinquent behavior among youth. Delinquent behavior flows from some social situations and conditions; by altering those situations and conditions, delinquent behavior is to be reduced. This apparently simple and obvious principle turns out to be a common stumbling block.

5.2.3 Selecting Targets of Change

A distinguishing feature of selective organizational change is that the potential targets of change are the expectations of organizations (manifest in policies and practices). Selecting targets for change thus is a different enterprise from selecting clients (target groups or persons) for particiaption in service or treatment programs.

There are two aspects to the selection process, here called "technical" and "political." Pursuing organizational change with any prospects for success requires attention to both aspects (at this and every subsequent stage). Analysis of the technical dimensions of the setting calls for assembling evidence that specific organizational features can reasonably be identified as contributing to delinquent behavior. Analysis of the political dimensions of the setting calls for attention to the current interests, agreements, pressures, complaints, and the like that add up to support for, or resistance to, change. The interplay of technical and political conditions will affect both the formulation of the problem and the decision about which organizational features to identify for attention.

5.2.3.1 Technical Aspects of Selection

The technical part of the problem is to identify, in some reliable and valid way, the relationship between some organizational practice or policy and the production of delinquent behavior. Existing theory and research may be examined for clues. If they fit the situation, they might be used as the guide to the features of the organization that should be redesigned. Original research in the present situation may be needed to verify a suggestion from existing literature or to specify it, or may be used to explore from scratch the possibility of relationships between organizational processes and delinquency.* On

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* Original research should be undertaken only where a demonstrable technical or political need for it exists. Its appeal as a way to postpone actual work for organizational change should be resisted.

this technical basis, the organizational processes to be dealt with would be those that are demonstrated most clearly to have the greatest impact in the production or prevention of delinquent behavior.

The relationship between a given organizational practice or policy and delinquency usually will not be crystal clear, immediate, universal, or singular. Any given organizational contributor to delinquency will be but one of several contributors. It will not produce delinquency uniformly or immediately in all youth subject to it. The relationship between the organizational practice and delinquent behavior will not be visible to the naked eye but will be discernible mostly through some form of research, which will render a statement of probabilities, not certainties.

These comments should not be taken as unique to the approach being described here. The relationship between any form of treatment and delinquency is not crystal clear, immediate, universal, or singular either. Neither is the relationship between any school practice and learning, nor the relationship between any form of employment agency and the work success of their clients, nor the relationship between any characteristic of the employing organization and the productivity of the worker.

The difficulty of discerning the relationship between organizational practices and policies and delinquency should be taken into account in designing efforts towards change. Although not sufficient to produce action, research evidence on such relationships is necessary in efforts towards selective organizational change. Efforts towards selective organizational change should include continuing efforts to examine such relations as a way of redirecting and refining activities.

5.2.3.2 Political Aspects of Selection

The political aspect of identifying organizational processes for attention appears to boil down to making a connection between some organizational process and a problem or need recognized by many persons. Presumably, the energy and attention required for any attempt at organizational change stems from widespread concern with some visible circumstance or need. Delinquent behavior may be that circumstance. In school contexts, it might be concern about violence, vandalism, disruption, drug and alcohol abuse, dropout and truancy, or youth unemployment. While the relations between these needs or problems and delinquency often is not simple or straightforward, it still may be justifiable and advantageous to ally one's own efforts with efforts on some of these problems. This would be the case when energy for change is more likely to flow from concern with a problem other than delinquency, yet when the initiatives called for are highly complementary or identical.

Thus, one phase of the political identification of the organizational process to be addressed is locating widespread concern that may be a source of energy for the attempt. The other phase in the political arena is connecting the problem or concern with relevant organizational processes to formulate an issue that can be dealt with politically. The political task, then, is connecting an intended organizational reform to a politically powerful interest or end.

It is preferable to avoid public discussion of such organizational processes as "problems." When the discussion revolves around definitions of a problem, a common pattern may be one of attack on the organization in question and then a reaction from the organization that increases resistance, perhaps to the point that it cannot be overcome. An alternative is to introduce a solution as a desirable development rather than a response to a problem. "Eliminating tracking" might be rephrased as "increasing educational opportunity," even though precisely the same outcome is intended.

5.2.3.3 Interplay of Technical and Political Considerations

The selection of a target for change will emerge from simultaneous consideration of both technical and political grounds for action. For example, the technical part of the work might identify school tracking and ability grouping as central to the production of delinquency. If there is political interest in delinquency, or in school vandalism or disruption, the task then would be to introduce relevant information to appropriate persons so that the connection between school tracking and delinquency can be considered seriously and have a chance to surface as an issue. Politically, however, drug and alcohol abuse may be of greater concern in a community, along with youth unemployment. Under these circumstances, it may be more appropriate and feasible to seek options for organizational reform among employment agencies and employer organizations to increase opportunities for youth to be useful, to belong, and to engage in productive activities, all directed towards the reduction of both delinquent behavior and drug and alcohol abuse.

Focusing exclusively on either technical considerations or political circumstances will diminish prospects for success. Deriving the strategy for change solely on technical grounds will increase the risk that one is right (has picked an appropriate target) but irrelevant (has not tied into any forces that could influence change). Deriving the strategy for change solely on political grounds -- joining a parade because it happens to be passing through town -- will increase the risk that one is well underway in changing something that has little or no effect on delinquency.

At any given time, there is a variety of organizational reforms worth working on from the technical standpoint. Which reform is

selected for attention comes out of the interplay with political movements. Throughout, the formulation and expression of the issue is crucial.

5.2.4 Difficulties in Conducting a Change Initiative

Earlier in this section, we described several reasons why persons may be reluctant to try selective organizational change as a delinquency prevention strategy. For those willing to pursue such a direction, we also can anticipate some of the difficulties that could keep the effort from getting off the ground or that could render it ineffective. Some of the principal difficulties are examined in the following paragraphs.

5.2.4.1 Inertia

The main source of resistance to most efforts towards selective organizational change is inertia -- the tendency of organizations to continue as they are. Objections voiced by outspoken individuals may reflect more than scattered substantive quarrels with the change proposed. Tactically, this means that, in most cases, steps to isolate, neutralize, or destroy supposed enemies will be irrelevant and certainly much less important than mobilizing enough energy to overcome the inertia of an existing, integrated system.

5.2.4.2 "Target" Practices Serve More Than One Purpose

One selects organizational practices and policies for attention because of their probable contribution to delinquent behavior. The activities in question were not deliberately designed to generate delinquency; that effect usually is unanticipated, unintended, and unnoticed. Moreover, the activities of interest probably are intended to serve one or several purposes, some of which must continue to be served.

Whatever organizational practice or policy one singles out for attention and redesign, one is likely to discover that it is connected to other practices and policies of the organization and, perhaps, to activities outside the organization as well. Altering the activity in question is likely to affect the related activities, perhaps adversely, and this is a probable source of resistance to redesigning the activity.

Testing and grading practices were not developed to produce delinquency, although it appears that, in many instances, they may do so. Rather, they were intended to serve as methods of evaluating progress and productivity for teachers, students, and others. They are used to make decisions about appropriate courses for students and to determine eligibility for extracurricular activities. They may be used at some

point by employers to decide whether to hire someone. Some of these purposes may have to be served by an alternate system of testing and marking that is designed to contribute less to delinquency. It is difficult to quarrel, for example, with the argument that students, teachers, and parents need some understandable description of competence attained in a given instructional activity. On the other hand, it is not at all clear that the system of testing and marking should serve the purpose of determining eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.

In planning and executing organizational change initiatives, such interactions among organizational parts should be anticipated so that there can be a plan for dealing with them. The general possibilities for dealing with related activities are few. It may be possible to redesign an activity so as to reduce its contribution to delinquency or increase its contribution to prevention without adversely affecting related activities. It may be possible to renegotiate some of the related activities favorably. A usual difficulty with any of these options is that they may broaden the negotiation and increase the number of actors and, thus, increase the size of the chore. Much will depend on being able to isolate specifically the parts of the activity one wants to redesign and to differentiate truly problematic connections with other activities from merely habitual ones.

5.2.4.3 "Target" Practices Are Complex

The organizational arrangement or process at hand is likely to have political, economic, organizational, and technical aspects, all of which are relevant simultaneously. Over the years, alternatives to conventional classroom comparisons expressed in letter grades have been suggested. Techniques have been developed for evaluating student performance in terms of objective statements of competence that do not require comparison of students with one another. The availability of the techniques has not been sufficient to ensure their use. There is the economic question of the costs of applying the techniques universally. There is the organizational question of how to accumulate competency-based credits from different classes to produce a measure of a student's overall standing. Any shift in the system of grading may affect, and be reacted to, by parents, universities, employers, and others and, thereby, become a political matter.

Any intended organizational change can involve questions of technique, cost, organization, and politics, all of which must be considered in planning the effort to make the change. Being able to suggest a technique that might replace a suspected contributor to delinquent behavior is not sufficient. One also must suggest political, organizational, and economic conditions under which the technique is feasible, and move to produce them.

5.2.5 Span of Control

As a result of some of the difficulties mentioned above, the instigators of an attempt at selective organizational change will have relatively little direct control over the situation. Steps can be taken only with the assent and support of many. The prospect of affecting many youth over a long span of time makes dealing with the difficulty worthwhile. By contrast, the manager of a self-contained program has relatively high control over some activities called delinquency prevention, but those activities are likely to affect relatively few youth and only then for the life of the program. In this trade-off between degree of control of the activity and the efficacy of the activity's result, the organizational change initiative compares favorably with the self-contained program.

5.3 Experimentation

As argued earlier, delinquency prevention appears inherently an experimental undertaking. It is a venture in which we begin from the stance that we do not know what will reliably reduce delinquent behavior and design initiatives to provide the best chance of *finding out.* Full-scale programs must proceed on the basis of the best knowledge available today, but these same programs can be an important source of continuous improvement in our knowledge base. In light of the facts that many of the programs that have been tried and are being tried are either demonstrably ineffective or inconclusive (when they are evaluated with any rigor at all), that the leading theories and prominent research findings present diverse and sometimes inconsistent pictures of the problem, and that the program options that do appear most promising in light of those theories and research findings often are undeveloped and untested, the stance that we do not know and should find out seems the only reasonable one to take.

The experimental procedure follows from this stance. Experimentation is neither a permissive notion nor a permissive procedure. While a deliberate diversity of initiatives is desirable to provide comparisons and to explore contending arguments, experimentation does not justify simply trying anything we can think of in the hope that something will work. Rather, experimentation calls for repeated review of theory, research, and experience to date, to compose an array of the most promising options, each of which can be attempted with sufficient vigor and skill to ensure that it actually is tested. The more common pattern at present is that presumably "innovative" initiatives merely are repeated and imitated, with good intention but usually without serious evaluation and with no demonstrable result of wider utility.

Similarly, experimentation does not mean simply adding some evaluation to a program. Rather, an initiative is conceived and implemented, from

the beginning, as an operational test of main principles and strategies, and is organized in a way that maximizes the opportunities for testing. This calls for careful conception and design of the program, and methodical control of implementation to ensure that the design either is realized as intended or adapted deliberately.

Such experiments are likely to appear forbidding, technically complex, "impractical." However, persons regularly demonstrate that, with care, skill, and preparation, experiments of high quality can be carried out in practical programs under difficult conditions. The Vera Institute's Manhattan Bail Project is an often-cited example. Moreover, experimentation is not an all-or-nothing proposition. Ventures falling well short of the experimental ideal still can be substantial improvements over typical programming, both in the quality of the programming and in the utility of the findings.

This section cannot tell "how to do an experiment." Whole books are written on the subject, ranging from Reicken and Boruch's Social Experimentation (written for an expert audience of researchers and evaluators), to Action Research: A Handbook for Managers, Administrators, and Citizens (Little, 1978), which was written to help persons not trained in research to manage research as part of their activities. Both volumes provide access to a variety of other materials on evaluation research. These volumes can help anyone get a handle on the desirability, purposes, and main issues in experimental procedure. Clearly, such books cannot allow everyone to manage experiment themselves.

The single thing that could be done to make experimental procedure more attractive, less forbidding, and eminently more manageable is to cultivate -- from the very beginning when the delinquency prevention project is no more than a glimmer -- working partnerships with persons who are interested, trained, and experienced in the evaluation of social interventions, particularly delinquency prevention programs. The earlier such partnerships are established, the more attractive and feasible experimental procedure will be. The longer the matter is put off, the less attractive and feasible will be any evaluation, much less experimentation.

A person might assume rather easily an experimental stance, might be willing to try an unfamiliar procedure methodically even though not certain it will work, for the sake of finding out. That same stance is rather more difficult to cultivate in a collective venture, which these delinquency prevention programs will be. There are likely to be several different, sometimes contradictory, perspectives and contending options, each strongly believed by its proponents and argued to be certain to produce the desired outcome. Finding out what works presents the prospect of winning or losing, perhaps losing even the justification for one's job. Such a situation is not conducive to the experimental stance. However, one may point out that such situations are not conducive

to any systematic action. They are likely to produce a raft of disparate efforts that stand little chance of complementary effect and that have the distinct possibility of canceling each other out. None of the separate ventures is likely to receive sufficient attention or resources to test it adequately, and testing is likely to be avoided.

From this standpoint, the advocacy of an experimental position may be a natural and helpful part of the political action needed to initiate any sensible, well-supported (or at least little-resisted) effort. The observation that several decades of serious work have produced no panacea for delinquency may help in a strategy to deescalate claims and to begin a more moderate conversation. In the long run, learning the effects of programs may be as or more important than the effects themselves and may introduce a possible ground for agreement where there was little or no ground for agreement. Even the most vociferous critic of a particular approach might agree to allow it to be tried, provided it is to be rigorously evaluated, on the grounds that "*Finally* it will be shown how stupid and ineffective that approach really is."

One can expect no throng of devotees to line up behind the experimental ideal, but one could expect some of the notions associated with experimentation to play a part in an agreement to try one, two, or three of the most promising approaches well enough and long enough to find out. For persons worried about losing face or losing a job as a result of an evaluation, one might suggest that persons who use evaluation skillfully and ethically thereby equip themselves to stay ahead of the game. They may be rewarded for producing useful findings, even when those findings reveal a program to have been ineffective. And, they are likely, as a result of the evaluation, to know the direction in which they need to move. That may given them a leg up on persons who simply take refuge in the fact that their procedures have never even been tested.

We suggest that, if the purposes and procedures of experimentation are taken up seriously and sensibly in partnership with persons equipped to help design and conduct experiments, the prospects for collective experimental ventures, and for methodical progress in delinquency prevention, will increase significantly.

5.4 Futility of Blaming

A standard response to any difficulty is to blame a person for it. This provides a very clear focus for attention. This usually is done in the course of an "explanation" of the problem and usually is substituted for any sensible action to resolve the problem. From long observation of efforts towards change in school, Sarason remarked:

> "It was inevitable that all of those who participated in, or were affected by, the unfolding social drama would, at some point, "explain" what happened or was happening, a polite way

> of saying that blame assignment would be an important issue and topic of conversation. Of all the participants (administrators, supervisors, principals, children, parents, and teachers) the teachers were in the center of the stage. In a real sense, they were the actors and the rest were audience. It is not surprising, therefore, that the teachers were the chief recipients of blame. No one viewed the situation as the consequence of processes taking place in and characterizing a particular social organization, or as reflecting conceptions (implicit or explicit) about the nature and structure of the settings that determine how the change process will be effected." (Sarason, 1971, p 44).

In response to delinquency, blame has been assigned to youth, to their parents, to their teachers, to their ministers, to their social workers, and to their probation officers, just to name a few. The practice appears to have produced few, if any, useful results, no matter who has been blamed. One might conclude it is a futile activity.

The assignment of blame to persons is likely to be equally futile in the attempt to initiate delinquency prevention programs of the sorts recommended here. Moreover, the assignment of blame is likely to be an active source of error, frustration, and lost opportunity. The occurrence appears to be sufficiently typical and sufficiently relevant to make of it a general principle here. One might entertain two kinds of interpretations of behavior as grounds for action.

When someone's cooperation is sought and resistance is offered, one common response is to attribute the resistance to some personal characteristic, that is, to assign blame. Say I go to a meeting with some other persons interested in delinquency prevention. I have a sterling idea that I cannot execute myself (we often have good ideas on behalf of others). But, there is a person in the room who could implement or at least initiate action on that idea. That person is the principal of a high school. So, with great enthusiasm, I point out how the school's adoption of my idea is bound to solve many problems of delinquency. It is possible that the principal will respond, "That's a brilliant idea; we'll implement it tomorrow." I will think the principal a sterling character worthy of my sterling idea.

There are some other possible responses from the principal. He or she immediately may launch into a long, quite knowledgable discussion about the attention that has been given to this undeniable difficulty, the complexity of the 33 options that have been considered to date, the high morale and sense of purpose that have attended actions to date, etc., etc. In the nineteenth minute of this eloquent monologue, it may occur to me that the principal has not yet said anything concrete and certainly has not entertained my suggestion. Or, the principal might move his or her chair slowly back 3 feet from the table and henceforth say little. Or, the principal might climb up the nearest wall and across the ceiling, all the while offering strident deprecations of my idea and of my qualifications to offer it.

To these possible responses, my reaction is likely *not* to be that the principal is a sterling character worthy of my sterling idea. It is more likely to be that the principal is stupid (uninformed, ill-intentioned, recalcitrant, lazy, etc., etc.). That is, I assign blame to the principal. The futility of all this is shown by the options that my interpretation leaves me: I can give up, or I can attempt to destroy the principal. Perhaps in less drastic form, we all go around making such interpretations and limiting our opportunities in exactly this way.

It might be true, one supposes, that the principal actually *is* stupid, recalcitrant, ill-intentioned, etc., etc. But the interpretation is seldom useful. A more commonly useful interpretation, representing a main approach to securing cooperation, is that the principal's life is as complicated as my own. This assumption raises some possibilities, such as the idea really has been considered or even tried and not found feasible or desirable (it is unlikely that anything I might think of for schools has not been thought of or even tried by at least one person in that school). Or, the principal likes the idea but immediately can think of at least four policies that would preclude it and two groups of teachers who would not favor it. Or, the teachers might like it a lot, but it is going to produce confustion or resistance among at least some parents. Or, it is going to be difficult to justify to the administration or the regional accrediting association. These may or may not be *real* difficulties; that is almost beside the point. The point in the meeting is that the principal perceives those difficulties, and that perception has a lot to do with the response to my sterling idea. In the principal's response may be a host of cues as to the source of the resistance.

If I allow these possibilities, then my options for action are considerably expanded. One option is to have presented my proposal at another time and in another setting so as to increase my chances to get more than cues about the source of the difficulty. The very least I can do is to follow up on some of those cues, learn what will be the likely response from teachers and students and parents and the administration and the accrediting association. At the very least, I will be much better informed for making another proposal later. There is no guarantee, but there is the distinct prospect that I may find out that there are conditions that I could help change and that would make it much easier for the principal to like and explore my idea.

There is nothing profound about these observations. Persons frequently are senstive to the situations and constraints of others. That is a common reason proposals aren't made in the first place. The point, rather, is to suggest that securing the cooperation needed in these delinquency prevention programs calls for much more systematic and methodical use of the second perspective than most of us manage most of the time. Much of what folows is simply an effort to elaborate that approach for situations where the most relevant situations and constraints are likely to be organizational.

5.5 Working with Organizations

Organizations of one kind or another, from schools to employment agencies to clubs, are of central interest in these delinquency prevention programs. We want to work with and within them and to support needed changes in their procedures. We have a tendency to discuss organizations as though they were persons. We say, "The schools think. . ." or "The welfare department intends. . ." Such manners of speaking are not only literally incorrect but also tend to obscure organizational features that will be crucial to tactics.

Organizations are made up of persons, but they are not the same thing as persons; they have to be understood in other ways. For the present purposes, we can use some simple ideas about what organizations amount to:

- Organizations can be seen as complex sets of expectations about the good, proper, and efficient ways to get something done and to get along while doing so. For example, all persons in a community share some expectations about schooling -- what it is for and how it is done. The points of disagreement and difference in emphasis should not conceal the agreements. School personnel share many of these expectations with community members and, even more, among themselves. Although it should be obvious, we tend to overlook how powerfully such expectations control the behavior of persons who share or are subject to them. Try for a moment to think of another reason why almost every American male, almost every day, irrespective of activity, climate, or circumstances, puts on a pair of pants without even thinking about it. Office work in a cold climate might very well be done more comfortably in a long wool skirt; that doesn't happen much among males. And if pants do not do the trick, think about neckties for a minute. Or the large numbers of persons who apparently think fit to take leave of a total stranger after the briefest of encounters by saying, "Have a nice day." If that works, think about some of your own habits and routines.

- These shared expectations about proper and effective activity tend to be reflected in: The habits and practices by which persons get through the day; the formal and informal

policies of an organization; budgets, job descriptions, and offices; the chain-of-command and rank of the members; and statutes and regulations that pertain to the activity.

- To change an organization, then, means to change those shared expectations, to change habits and practices, to change budgets and chains of command, to change statutes and regulations. That is not the same task as persuading a person to do something, and the question is raised, how do organizations change?

5.5.1 Overcoming Inertia

Active, thoughtful resistance probably is a small component in the failure of most delinquency prevention initiatives that fail. More often, organization inertia is more than sufficient to finish them off. It will be useful to assume here that the most powerful force operating in most efforts towards organizational change is inertia, the tendency of an organization to operate on Thursday as it did on Tuesday. Inertia could be argued to have several sources, some of which have been mentioned at other points. Organizational routines are habitual and comfortable, and changing them is personally painful and unsettling. The activity in question is the subject of well-established expectations widely shared. Even if the intended change is not overtly resisted, there must be a negotiation. The activity in question serves six purposes other than the one in which we are interested and, moreover, is closely connected to five other activities. To change the activity will affect those other purposes and activities, and this increases the possibility of resistance and makes the design of the change more complicated.

The activity is partly defined by a law largely out of control of the immediate actors. Making the change will have costs, and it is not clear where the revenues will come from. Any organization is a complex system of interdependent parts that need to be adjusted to each other, and if it did not work on Thursday approximately as it operated on Tuesday, it would not work at all. That is inertia, and it can be taken to be the most powerful force operating in most situations where delinquency prevention projects are intended.

5.5.1.1 Need to Prepare the Setting

One of the more immediate implications of the preceding is that these delinquency prevention projects will require considerably more early work to prepare the community and the sponsoring organization than usually is the case. Many self-contained (particularly grant-based) programs can be

established (as distinct from effective) with little more than tolerance from the communities in which they operate. A grant settles, at least for a time, the question whether the intended activity is the sort of thing the community otherwise would support. A new staff can be hired from scratch, and questions of reorganization or reassignment do not come up. Developing needed procedures can be the first assignment in the new job. In a fresh project, competition between entranched practices and innovative ones is avoided, and there is no problem of having to keep an old set of routines going while developing and installing new ones. Where the project's activity is familiar and experienced persons can be hired, the matter of getting the program going is made even more straightforward.

By contrast, the projects recommended here are intended to be based in activity negotiated as legitimate in several quarters and mostly supported by existing resources. The question of whether the community would, or will, support such an activity arises immediately. The project staff are to be drawn, in large part, from existing staff in the sponsoring organization, so questions of reorganization and reassignment need to be dealt with. Many of these members of the staff already are otherwise engaged in the organization. Where new routines are needed, a way must be found to develop them while the old ones still are being used. Finally, many of the relevant perspectives and the activities for which they call will be unfamiliar.

All of this adds up to a need for substantial efforts to prepare *and select* the community and the sponsoring organization. In some cases, deselection will be the most prudent response to forbidding preparation difficulties.

For persons accustomed to supporting delinquency prevention activities by making grants, the need for preparation is closely tied to the business of locating appropriate proponents for the grant. In general, it appears that more time for preparation and selection of grantees should be provided, and that more technical assistance -- going well beyond the preparation of a technically adequate proposal -- will be needed. Given the general strategy involved here, these preparatory activities should not be seen as "overhead." They are integral parts of developing a program likely to endure after the grant expires.

5.5.1.2 Pressures Supporting Change

In planning to overcome organizational inertia, two classes of relevant forces, or two arguments about the stimulus for change in organizations, could be considered. First, there is the argument that organizations tend to change in response to external pressures and demands that can affect the budgets, personnel, prestige, clients, and other elements of the organization. The argument is that organizations in isolation will not change much or not change quickly. A related argument is that we tend to credit an organization's personnel with more power to change their organ-

ization that they actually have, and we tend to underestimate the energy needed to overcome organizational inertia. Clearly, the goals, aspirations, and intentions of an organization's personnel are important; however, organizations have properties and tendencies of their own that are largely independent of, and to some degree beyond the control of, the persons who inhabit them at a given time.

From this point of view, one looks to *external* pressures to provide the stimulus for change. Four kinds of such pressures might be considered:

- An organization can be affected by the operations of other organizations in the community. Considerations of quality aside, an employment agency's ability just to place its clients in any work depends mostly on arrangements in employing organizations. Shifts in those organizations that limit placements may have the result that the employment agency will change its routines and concentrate more on "job preparation," "training," and the like as a way of maintaining a fundable activity.

- An organization may be placed under strain by pervasive forces, such as general budget limitations. Reduced ability to purchase ancillary services may force these service to be dropped or provided in-house, requiring changes in other activities.

- The expressed expectations and demands of citizens, backed up by the possibility of political or legal action, can exert pressure on an organization and stimulate changes in response.

- Professional associations set standards and call for improved practice, and these may be stimulants for change, operating particularly on organizational prestige.

The other class of forces that may be argued to contribute to change includes those arising within an organization. Rothman (1974) generalizes that human-services professionals tend to underestimate the degree of support for innovation within established professions and programs. It certainly would be a mistake to overlook the possibility that the purposes of an intended change are agreeable to all concerned and that the method can be worked out by routine processes of planning, program design,

and training within an organization. The crude message is, "Don't assume, but find a way to assess the strength of these forces for change."

A second internal stimulant of change may be: Stresses and problems internal to the organization, arising out of the mismatch of various activities, discrepancies between goals, standards, and actual outcomes; the contention of ideological or professional groups within the organization; and other such situations. The possibility here is that an intended change would resolve such stresses, contribute to organizational maintenance and stability and, therefore, be seen as desirable and feasible.

Two observations might be offered about all of these potential external and internal stimulants of change. First, they are unlikely to be manipulable over the short term. At a given time, particularly where short-term projects are intended, the only possibility may be to look for such forces for change, and plan the initiative accordingly. This should be done systematically, given the bearing on the outcome. Second, ever where such forces for change exist or can be brought into play, they are not necessarily favorable to the intended change. For example, a widespread and vocal citizen concern with school violence and vandalism might constitute a force for efforts to "improve the climate of the school" (it has in places) or for increasing punitive measures, surveillance, fences, guard dogs, and the number of rules for conduct. Tactically, it might be better to come back later than to precipitate movement in an unfavorable direction.

Moreover, it should be suggested that much depends on which issue or problem is chosen for attention and how it and the proposed initiative are described. A community leaning towards punitive measures might see some of the school options presented earlier as "permissive" but react more favorably to the argument that, "We didn't have time to get into trouble when we were kids because we were working." Thus, it might either tolerate or support an employment program under some conditions.

Perhaps the way to see the problem of initiating a delinquency prevention project is to recognize that there are several probably valuable programs that could be implemented, and there are several different ways to describe and carry out each option. On the other hand, there are diverse sets of external and internal forces that might be favorable to change, or unfavorable to change, depending on the organization being considered.

In trying to begin a delinquency prevention program, one could entertain simultaneously several different program options while examining local circumstances, to chose the set of circumstances, the organization, and the description of the issue and program options that presents the most favorable prospects, from the standpoints of both feasibility and effect. Clearly, this is not an exact judgment but, to the degree that we all become more systematic at making it, our chances for productive work should be increased.

5.5.2 Building Towards Negotiations

If forces favorable to some change are present in the situation, the next question may be how those forces are converted into the negotiations from which any new or revised activity might come. It appears that an important question is whether personnel within an organization recognize those forces as calling for *their* action and connect those forces with anything the organization is doing or could do. If these connections are not made, even the most intense pressures might lead to no definite or desirable action. In the face of quite vocal but vague or contradictory demands, one can say, "those people sure are angry about something; *they should* get it together." Problems often are recognized but are thought fit for action by someone else. Perceived failures in a program may be less likely to lead to the idea that reorganization is needed than to the notion that we need "a better grade of client."

This recognition of the responsibilities or opportunities of one's own organization need not be the same as accepting blame, and efforts to turn it into that probably will be unhelpful, since they could turn a discussion into a defensive standoff. In many cases, it will be possible or preferable to propose a "solution" without any overt mention of a "problem;" the implicit, unstated, but widely recognized connection with a troublesome condition will be sufficient. The importance of formulating the issue or options, mentioned above, is further emphasized.

If pressures favorable to some change are recognized in an organization and are connected with something that the organization is doing, it ought to be apparent in the talk of persons who work in the organization. There should be at least some tentative reconsiderations or options, at least among some persons. To know whether this is happening, one will have to be working in the organization or have some other way of obtaining accurate information about who is doing such talking and with whom, how many of them there are, the way in which they are talking about it, and so on. Often, overt demands or requests are made of an organization in the absence of any such information or are not made because the situation automatically is assumed to be unfavorable. If one manages to start up a sensible conversation under these conditions, it will be a stroke of luck. The recommendation here is to identify sources of support within an organization ahead of time and to use this information to advantage during negotiations.

If responsibilities and opportunities for action are being recognized among personnel in the organization, another thing that can happen is that some person or persons in the organization will come to be recognized by their colleagues as ones who appropriately can and should talk about the matter with persons in other parts of the organization or in other organizations. If such persons come to be so recognized, it appears that they should be included in ensuing negotiations. This case should be distinguished from some cases that superficially satisfy this description, but

probably will be much less likely to permit productive negotiation. The outside negotiator should learn in advance the degree to which various persons really can speak for their organizations on the topics to be discussed.

In most communities, there are a good many committees meeting about a variety of matters. Such committees often include "representatives" from "interested" or relevant organizations. One observation frequently offered by persons who have experience with such committees is that they talk and talk, but little happens. In the terms of the preceding discussion, this may be because: (a) Few or none of the organizations are under any pressure to do anything about the "problem" being discussed; (b) in few or none of the organizations is this supposed problem seen as imposing a responsibility or providing any options; and (c), in any case, the persons present at the committee are not enfranchised to enter into serious negotiations that might affect their colleagues or organization. These "representatives" were picked for participation on some other basis. Under the circumstances, they cannot very well have a negotiation. So, they have "highly informative discussions" instead.

Another thing many communities have in quantity is "liaisons," or "coordinators of relations with. . ." These tend to be appointed in an organization to deal with other organizations or groups with which there frequently is business, or from which demands frequently come. Some are appointed precisely to give the appearance of attending to the outside world, but under formal or informal guidelines that make a negotiation impossible. In any case, these liaisons probably have to deal with a range of matters; on any given issue, they may be in no better position to hold a discussion than anyone else in the organization. Many of them recognize that and work closely with other persons in their organizations to increase their ability to negotiate for, or at least to predict, their organizations. Therefore, they will be useful contacts, if not the most useful parties to a negotiation.

In this description, it is impossible to overemphasize the necessity of having good information about what is going on *in* the organization in question, and not relying solely on the appearance it presents to the world. Thus, one way in which pressures on an organization are converted to negotiations of change is through the increasing recognition, among personnel in the organization, that those pressures give them responsibilities and options in the matter at hand, and a corresponding recognition of one or more of their members to deal with others about it. This conversion should not be guessed at or assumed, but discovered and cultivated. Doing so requires connections in the organization intended to change, either directly or through allies and intermediaries. Again, the way in which issues, problems, and options are described can make a great difference in the possiblity of facilitating such a conversion and in finding out whether such a conversion is occurring.

5.5.3 Managing the Negotiation

If it is assumed that conditions and events of the sort being discussed have produced some issues and options that could be discussed seriously, together with a set of people who are ready, willing, and able to discuss them seriously, the next question is of the conditions under which such discussions fruitfully can take place. In this connection, it appears that there is a common premature impulse to have a meeting or a committee, to which all the "interested" parties will be invited. It has been suggested that such occasions often are found unfruitful, and some reasons have been suggested why that may be. One could make the following characterization about a meeting of ten persons from several organizations or parts of an organization: At most, only five of the "interested" organizations are affected by problems or pressures favoring action, or have any ability to act; only four of the alleged "representatives" can say that the matter has received any consideration in their organization. Only three of the supposed representatives are in a position to consider even tentative proposals and negotiations, and they certainly aren't going to do it in front of all these spectators.

Without running afoul of "sunshine" principles -- the call to do public business in public -- one may propose that many of these delinquency prevention options should be brought to public view *gradually*. In the beginning, many persons who may be affected by these initiatives will find them unfamiliar and unpredictable, and this alone can stall the effort. Time is needed to make the options more predictable so that they can be discussed more publicly. One may imagine, or may have observed, ventures that got a start because, on a Thursday afternoon in someone's kitchen, a reverend, a school superintendent, a committee chairwoman who is married to a bank president and is a close friend of the school superintendent, and a director of a community services organization got together, expressly so that the reverend could say to the school superintendent, "Martha, we both know that something's got to be done about the troubles at Henry High. Under what conditions would you and other school people be able to talk about some different kinds of programs there, that some of the rest of us could help you with?"

It may be retorted to the preceding that this go-slow approach also will allow "the opposition" to organize; moreover, it invites backroom dealing that particularly excludes the powerless. There is some fairness to both charges. At the same time, it appears highly unlikely that effective delinquency prevention programs will be implemented because the opposition is taken by surprise or overwhelmed by force. In this field, it is not clear that there is any organized "opposition." It seems much more likely that delinquency prevention programs will be established either because they enjoy considerable support or because they have been described in such a way that those who would oppose them have a hard time maintaining any interest in them. And, the purpose of the suggested informal negotiations is not to avoid public discussion altogether; it is to make it

possible to frame up options that stand a chance of implementation so that they can be publicly discussed with some hope of an outcome.

To derive a general strategy for handling negotiations, one could consider the situations they create for the negotiators. Each negotiator is operating under at least two sets of demands which may be contradictory. At the negotiation, there is the demand to be forthcoming, to take a share of the load, to adapt one's activities to complement others, to be generous with information about one's operations, and so on. This often is described as showing "commitment," although it has very little to do with the commitments of a person and very much to do with circumstances in the negotiator's organization. The negotiator's home organization makes the other set of demands on the negotiator: To preserve confidentiality, not to expose the organization to attack or ridicule, not to disrupt important routines, to get others to adapt their activities to "ours," and so on.

The differences between these two sets of demands or expectations create stress for the negotiators. At one extreme, the demands can be so different as to create an impossible situation for a negotiator and can produce an attack on other negotiators, withdrawal from the negotiation, or a resort to long and meaningless monologues. Most readers will have had frequent opportunities to observe this first-hand. On the other extreme, the two sets of demands and expectations may appear entirely consonant. This might be very good news, indicating full agreement on a needed change. More frequently, it will mean simply that no action implying organizational change is being discussed; the utility of smooth and jovial meetings is probably suspect. Between the extremes, moderate differences in the two sets of demands may produce moderate stress that is useful because it presents for solution a problem of manageable proportions and tends to generate the energy needed to solve it. Such moderate stress seems to characterize what persons may describe as "creative" and "productive" meetings.

In forming tactics for such negotiations, one may note that these stresses could be managed in several ways: By choosing the appropriate time, place, formality, other negotiators; by rehearsing the different ways in which a proposal could be described and by identifying interim steps of accomplishment, short of a complete agreement; and by working with the demands and expectations present in the negotiator's home organization. The first two possibilities often are the subject of discussion in the planning of negotiations. Where a proposal is to be made, to whom, and how it is to be presented receive much attention. The third possibility, of working with the situation in the negotiator's home organization, is addressed less often.

If pressures for change have been recognized in an organization and problems and options have been discussed among personnel in the organization, it is possible that there will be, in that organization, allies who

will support the intended change. If one has contacts in the organization, it should be possible to know whether there are such allies, how many there are, how influential they are, where they are placed, why they might be able to carry out the intended change, and so on. One might have worked with such allies, before any negotiation takes place, to strengthen their hand and to formulate more specific options. By the time one actually gets to a negotiation, the chances could be increased considerably that the proposal can be made and accepted with the knowledge that it is probably workable. Put another way, one way to relieve the pressure on a negotiator is to scale down the request made of the organization, and another way is to increase support for the eventual request within the organization of which the request will be made.

Clearly, this all takes time and energy. It might be suggested that, if some of the time spent in futile meetings were diverted to these other tactics, more might be achieved with the same level of effort.

5.5.4 Realizing the Change

If such negotiations lead to agreement on a proposal, in which an organization's representatives agree to, or are forced to attempt, some change, one might be tempted to declare a success, a victory. That may be premature. In some cases, the agreement may have been made in bad faith, on the assumption that something superficial can be done or the agreement can be stalled until it is forgotten. However, -- the usual case and the case assumed here -- is that the organization's representatives agreed in good faith and see the change as desirable or, at least, inevitable. Even then, the staff of the organization faces a task made difficult by a variety of factors, many of which already have been mentioned: Changing an activity so as to serve one purpose and in such a way that it continues to serve four other legitimate and traditional purposes; resolving connections between the activity in question and other activities to which it is highly related; designing and negotiating the specific routines that make the whole thing feasible at all; etc., etc.

Once an organization's representatives have been persuaded to agree to (or at least to accept as inevitable) some initiative, there is a tendency to take the position that the organization's staff can "work out the details." When problems are encountered, the staff of the organization is blamed as an easy way to dispose of the matter. The organization to which this happens most often is the school, and the group to which it happens most often is the teachers. A new policy or curriculum or method is designed and promulgated, and line staff are left to cope with the "fallout," the 337 difficulties that could not have been anticipated by the planners and policymakers and will emerge only in practice. Nothing in the day-to-day experience of planners leads them to be able to anticipate the teachers' difficulties; nothing in the day-to-day experience of teachers lets them gain any perspective on change other than personal adequacy or inadequacy, or

lets them adopt routines by which they can assist each other in trying something new. Obtaining agreement does not mark the end of the negotiator's task; rather, it marks the beginning of a new set of responsibilities surrounding implementation.

At least with respect to schools, many of the implementation pitfalls described in this chapter were confirmed, on a large scale, by a Rand evaluation for the U.S. Office of Education of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Because the study bears on several points raised above, we quote extensively from the authors' summary of their findings:

> "Federal financial aid now makes up an important fraction of many local school district budgets, but its effectiveness in improving local educational practices is uncertain. Federally sponsored evaluations reveal inconsistent and generally disappointing results, and, despite considerable innovative activity on the part of local school districts, the evidence suggests that:
>
> > No class of existing educational treatments has been found that consistently leads to improved student outcomes (when variations in the institutional setting and nonschool factors are taken into account).
> >
> > "Successful" projects have difficulty sustaining their success over a number of years.
> >
> > "Successful" projects are not disseminated automatically or easily, and their "replication" in new sites usually falls short of their performance in the original sites.
>
> Consequently, although federal support for local school services has become well established, the "decade of reform" that began with ESEA has not fulfilled its expectations, and questions continue to be raised about what might be the most appropriate and effective federal role in improving the public schools. . . .
>
> "We found that federal change agent policies had a major effect in stimulating local education agencies to undertake projects that were generally consistent with federal categorical guidelines. This local response resulted from the availability of federal funds and, in some programs, from guidelines that encouraged specific educational practices.
>
> "But the adoption of projects did not insure successful implementation; moreover, successful implementation did not guarantee long-run continuation. . . .

". . . Effective strategies promoted *mutual adaptation*, the process by which the project is adapted to the reality of its institutional setting, while at the same time teachers and school officials adapt their practices in response to the project. . . .

"But faulty assumptions -- indeed even *one* faulty assumption among otherwise good ones -- can lead to ineffective and counter-productive programs. Federal policy to date has largely been based on a research and development point of view. . . . This R&D point of view was embodied in the following assumptions:

1. Improving educational performance requires innovative education technologies.

2. Improving educational performance requires the provision of missing resources to school districts.

3. Improving educational performance requires a targeted project focus.

"We believe that federal officials should set aside the largely ineffective R&D point of view. Instead, they might consider an approach that assumes school districts are ultimately responsible for improving their own performance but require both short- and long-run aid to achieve this end.

"School districts need institutional assistance, but an institutional development strategy can work only if federal officials identify those aspects of the local change process and of district organizational characteristics where federal resources and influence can be effective. The following premises might provide building-blocks to formulate this point of view:

1. Educational performance could be improved if more attention were paid to all stages of the local change process.

2. Educational performance could be improved with adaptive implementation assistance (interactive assistance tailored to local needs).

3. Educational performance could be improved if the capacity of school districts to manage change were enhanced.

These premises, as well as more specific recommendations suggested in the report, direct attention to areas that federal policy has tended to neglect." (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978, pp v-x).

That conclusion touches on a number of the points that have been raised in this chapter. An immediately relevant point here is the emphasis placed on "mutual adaptation" of projects and the school setting, and on the necessity of "adaptive implementation assistance." The difficult business not just of developing new organizational routines but also of turning them into a reliable practice needs to be supported. Both the persons who help talk organizations into something and the persons who fund delinquency prevention programs appear to have responsibilities and opportunities in this matter. With respect to schools, released time and assistance for planning and materials development, inservice training, and forms of consultation that support implementation over a long enough term to regularize a new practice are all possibilities.

It appears that essentially the same case could be made for the support to other organizations in which delinquency prevention projects are initiated. A recurring theme of the approach described in this volume has been to place delinquency prevention projects in existing schools, employment agencies, and community services organizations where those organizations will bear the main cost of the basic activity as a normal part of their operations. This will be accomplished largely by rearrangement of those normal operations to better serve delinquency prevention objectives. The costs of such rearrangements, if not of the basic activity, can be defrayed by resources devoted to delinquency prevention. The labor involved in such rearrangements can be shared by others interested in delinquency prevention.

5.6 Funding Delinquency Prevention

One implication of the point made immediately above is that persons in a position to allocate funds for delinquency prevention projects will change the purposes to which those funds are applied. Less often will a grant be made to support the basic activity, staff, and general operations of a delinquency prevention project. More often, delinquency prevention funds provided to a sponsoring organization (who will be more a partner than a grantee) will be applied selectively to defray one-time costs of change and to provide additional help at the most problematic points of the change process. These include: Negotiating agreements among agencies; building a recognition of opportunities and responsibilities among an organization's staff; developing new routines and materials; troubleshooting while the plan is being turned into routine practice; inservice training; and evaluation that is used systematically to correct practice.

5.7 Summary

The programs that will reliably reduce delinquent behavior are not known. Delinquency prevention programs should be operated in a way that will provide the best chance of finding out, as experiments requiring high standards both in design and in evaluation. A first step is to choose an

array of program possibilities that appear to stand the best chance, and to try them long enough and well enough to find out whether and how they work. Preceding chapters in this volume reviewed and narrowed the field to present some promising options.

The central implementation problems in the recommended programs are problems of organizational change. Either direct efforts towards selective organizational change or service programs implying significant organizational adaptation were recommended.

In this chapter, we have presented briefly one view of processes and tactics of organizational change that seem well suited to the delinquency prevention programs recommended. We have argued that an organization is most likely to change in a desired direction when:

- There are identifiable external and internal pressures on the organization that a change could resolve, and those pressures are favorable to change of the intended type.

- These pressures are recognized by personnel in the organization as calling for their own action and are recognized as being connected with something they are doing or could do, and this recognition leads to the recognition of some person or persons in the organization as ones who can discuss appropriately the matter with others.

- Requests and demands are put to the appropriate, recognized delegates of the organization under appropriate circumstances, usually beginning with low formality and visibility and leading to more visible and public negotiations.

- There emerges a group within the organization that supports the intended change and will support the implementation.

- "Adaptive implementation assistance" is provided over the term and in the ways needed to turn an idea into a regular practice.

It appears that many persons, both in the organization that changes and outside it, can play a valuable part in such change processes. These persons need to figure out where they stand in the system involved, and what parts of the process they reasonably could affect. They need to

figure out who else they need to know and work with, because it is certain that they alone cannot do much. Perhaps most importantly, the bulk of the tactical decisions that will be made -- about whom one talks to, who one's allies are, when and how one should act, and a hundred other matter -- depend on the intended change. One objective and situation may provide one set of answers, but these probably do not apply at all to another objective and situation. Persons intending to implement the delinquency programs described here need always to have a view of the intended outcome (which they are ready to adapt as needed) or of an array of equally acceptable outcomes, to which their energies are directed. "If you don't know where you are going, any path will take you there."

APPENDIX A

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